

PowerPlay

THE AUSTRALIAN PC GAMING MAGAZINE

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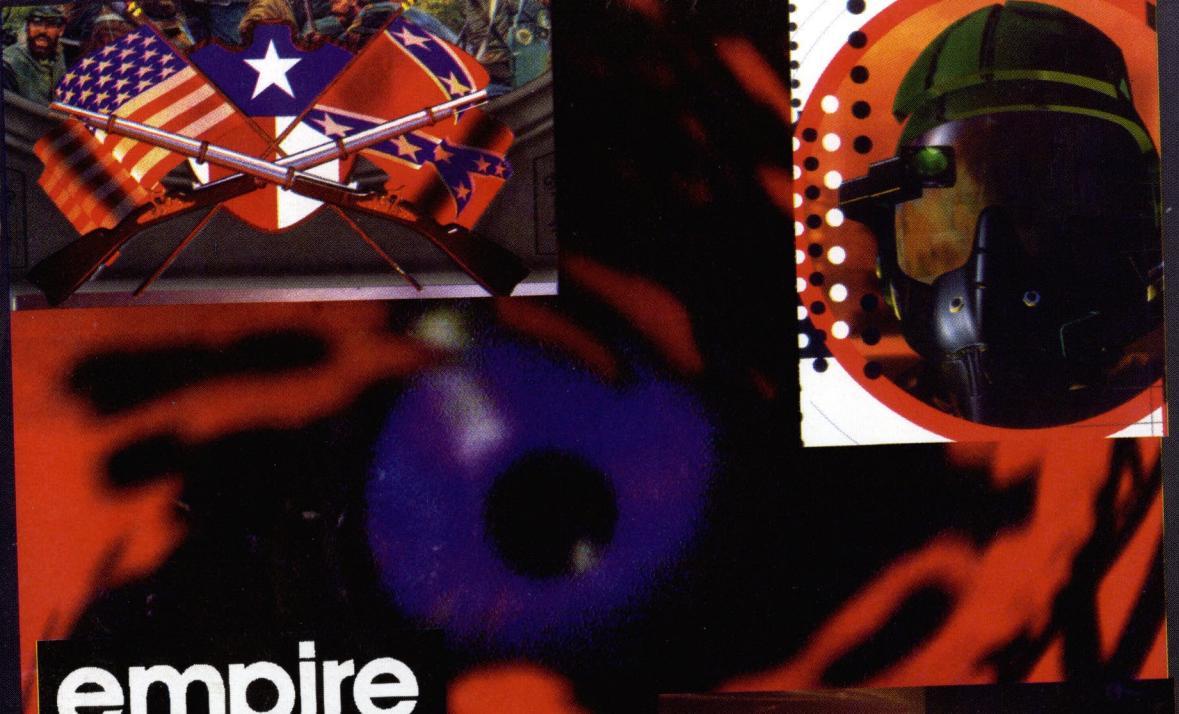
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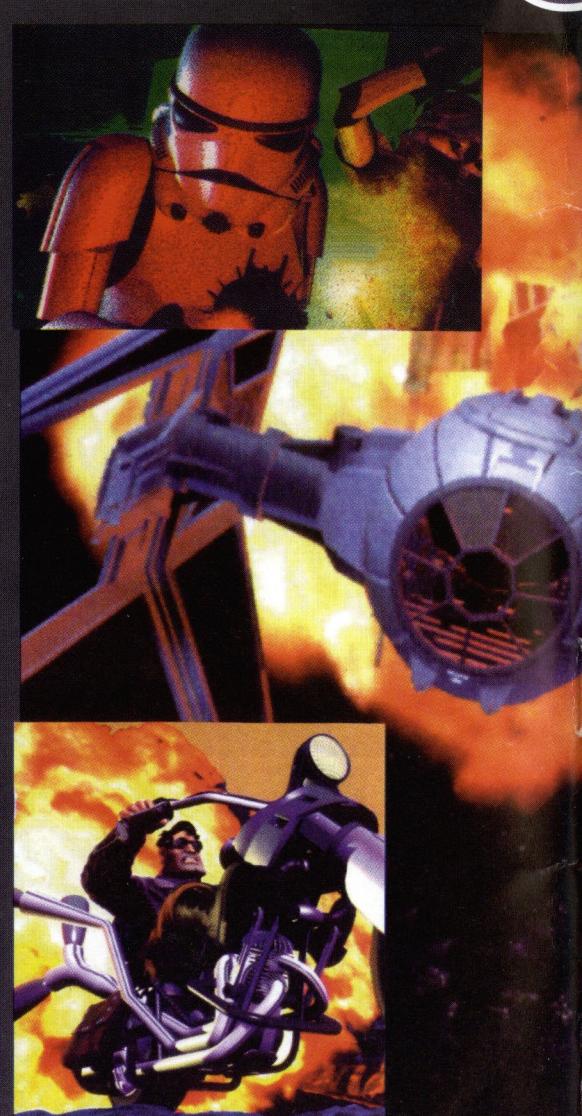
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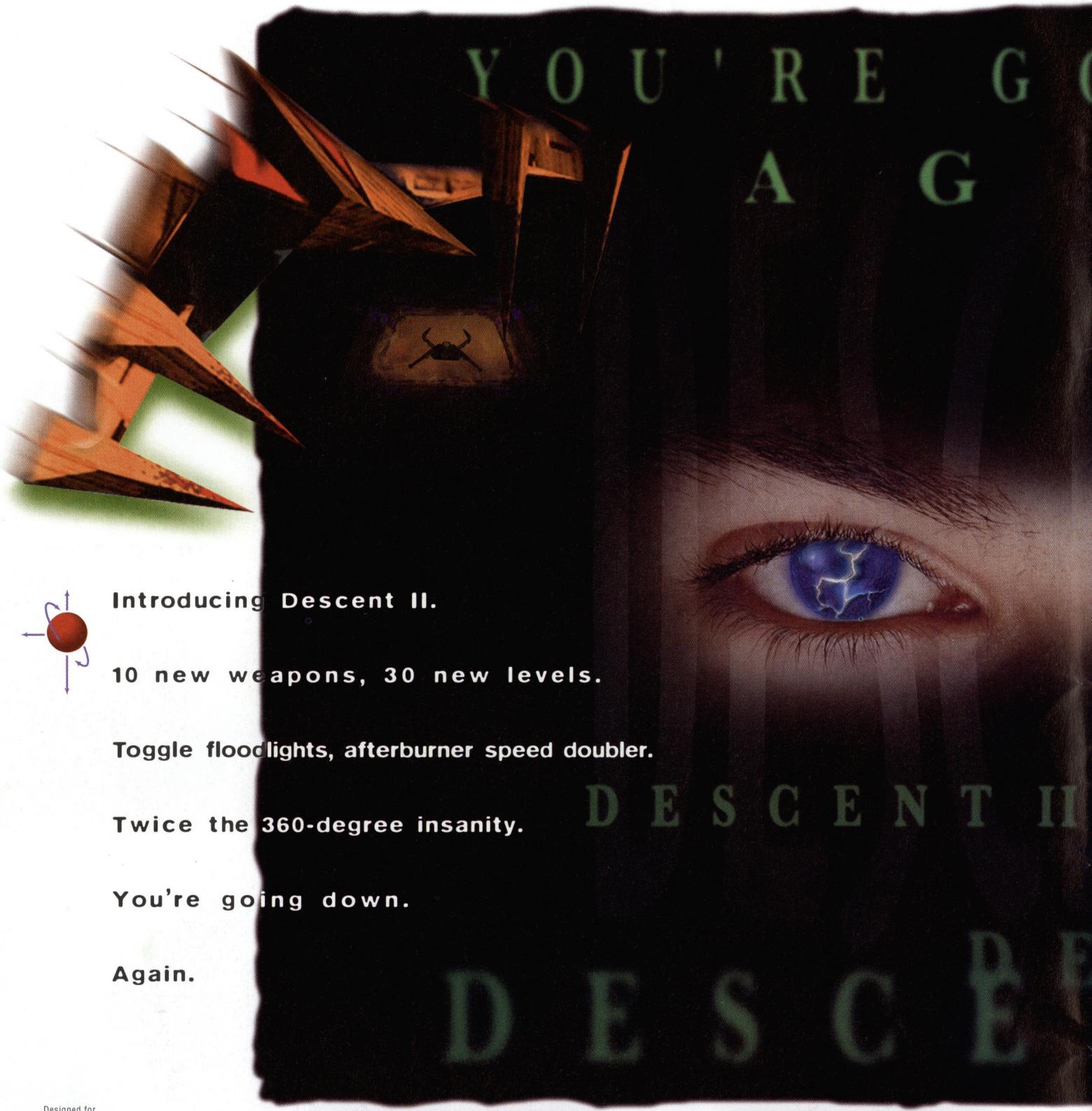


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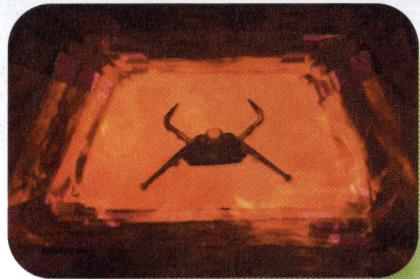
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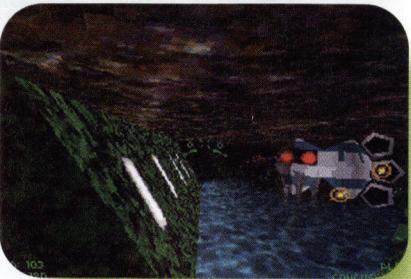
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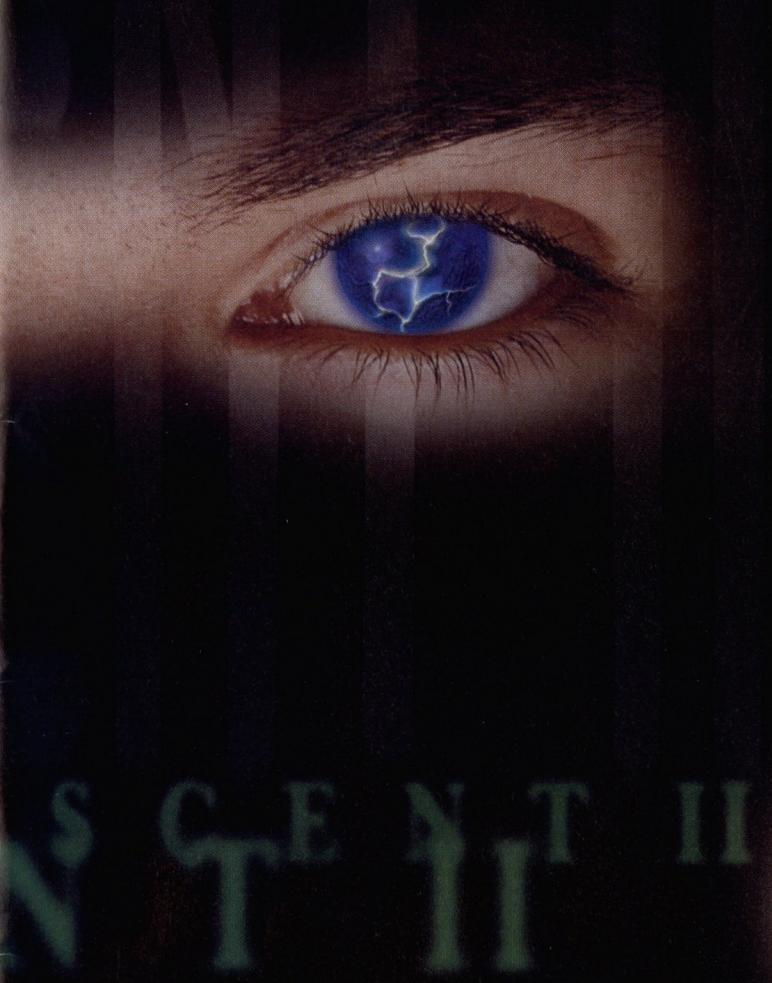
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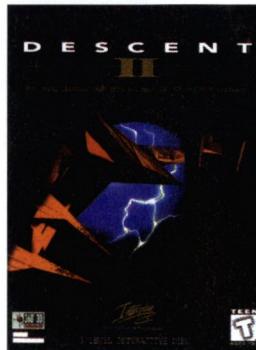
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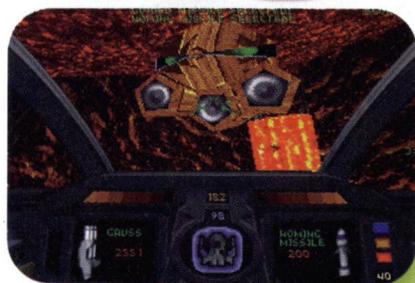
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Contents

This is PC PowerPlay.

Our aim is to bring you a complete source of PC game coverage each month. The best reviewers in the country will tell you what the games are really like, our technical and feature writers will keep you up to date with the rapidly moving world of gaming technology and each month, the cover CD will have playable demos of the newest and hottest games.

We're Australian too. Our local games industry is surprisingly large and for the first time, will get the attention it deserves. Being Australian doesn't mean being out of date though, PC PowerPlay will have news and reviews in each issue you'd have to wait months to read about in an imported magazine.

We'll try and do a better job at it too.

As proud as we are of the first issue, we know we'll only get better in time. Games are evolving more rapidly now than at any time in the past, we'll keep pace and because of that, so will you by reading PC PowerPlay.

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CD.Contents

READING THROUGH THE QUALITY GAMES MAG THAT IS POWERPLAY GENERALLY HAS ONE MAJOR SIDE EFFECT - IT'LL MAKE YOU WANT TO PLAY. TO THAT END WE'VE THOUGHTFULLY INCLUDED A CD ROM FULL OF THE TASTIEST DEMO'S AND SHAREWARE. EVERY MONTH WE'LL PACK THE CD WITH THE LATEST GAME DEMOS, MOSTLY PLAYABLE, SOMETIMES ROLLING, ALWAYS FUN. MANY OF THESE GAMES WON'T BE AVAILABLE ANYWHERE ELSE, AND WE'LL ALWAYS INCLUDE THE LATEST PATCHES AND A FEW USEFUL UTILITIES, PLUS ANYTHING ELSE WE THINK IS COOL.

HERE'S JUST SOME OF WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH'S CD



ABSOLUTE ZERO

Domark has big plans for this space combat game, the playable demo shows why. There's a variety of vehicles to take through the gorgeous 3D world, with strategy and plot-driven interaction there to keep it interesting.

ALLIED GENERAL

SSI nailed the WWII strategy genre with Panzer General, now play the good guys and enjoy the improved interface and AI.

ASTROFIRE

It's not Flash and Fabulous, it's a simple little shareware Asteroids clone that we had more fun with this month than just about anything else.

BAD MOJO

A cockroach game - really! This rolling demo is good for impressing friends, great graphics and a killer soundtrack. By Acclaim.

CONQUEST OF THE NEW WORLD

Interplay's resource management god game. It'll be a big one we predict, as you can probably tell from the cool playable demo.

DUKE NUKEM 3D

Simply stunning 3D action from 3D Realms. Amazing architecture and near perfect gameplay. Check out the special preview and interview starting page 26.



DESCENT 2

Read the review on page 44, play the demo and make up your own mind. We think you'll like it.

THE DIG

LucasArts sure took their time, but the results speak for themselves. This game is **HUGE**, as you can probably tell from our complete walkthrough starting on page 66.

FATAL RACING

Gremlin's Ridge Racer clone. Great in SVGA on a Pentium! Top arcade action.

MECHWARRIOR 2

Activision's definitive Mech sim. Worth it for the intro alone.

HEXEN

The wicked sequel to Heretic, by friends of id, Raven. Play any of three characters.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3

Classic arcade beat 'em up action.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Road racing doesn't get any better than this. Sample the mighty Dodge Viper.

Plus a whole lot more. There's enough fun on the CD to last you until the next one, enjoy!

SEISMOLOGISTS PREDICTION

Seismologists predict the biggest

predict the biggest QUAKE

**to rock the world
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This CD-ROM is yet
to be classified by
The Office of Film
and Literature
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RUNNING THE CD ON YOUR SYSTEM

- To run the PowerPlay CD in DOS, go to your CD prompt (probably D:), and type: "PCPOWER".
- To run the CD in Windows, go to your CD drive icon, click it to look at the CD and then click on "POWERWIN".

Most of the games on the CD are designed to be run from DOS, while they will probably install under Windows, you'll have to quit to DOS to run them (don't click on the DOS prompt icon, do a full restart instead). Games designed for Windows only will only appear on the Windows version of the PowerPlay menu, Bad Mojo and Allied General for example, are Windows only.

As you probably well know, PC games don't always work first time, every time. Configuring your system is the solution, although thankfully with common standards like DOS4GW and Win 95 the job is getting easier.

The most common problem you are likely to encounter is a shortage of conventional memory. Regardless of how much RAM is on your system, conventional memory will always be 640k. To see what's eating into your conventional memory, type "MEM/C MORE". Only HIMEM.SYS and your sound card and CD ROM drivers are needed to play most games. If you're running other programs, such as SMARTDRV.EXE, then you may have to disable them to gain more conventional memory. To do so, type "EDIT C:CONFIG.SYS" and put "REM" at the start of the offending lines, save and exit.

Next, type "EDIT C: AUTOEXEC.BAT" and do the same to non-essential lines, then reboot. Alternatively, hold F8 when the "STARTING MS DOS" or "STARTING WINDOWS 95" message is displayed, then choose "STEP BY STEP CONFIRMATION". If you're not sure what lines are needed, make a note of the driver name (the one ending in .EXE, .SYS or .COM), type HELP at the DOS prompt and look it up to see if you need it. If it's not in the HELP menu it's a third party driver, such as a CD ROM or sound card driver, so check the manual or call your vendor.

The games on the CD are designed to be run in different ways, some can be run straight from the disc, others need installing. The games that need to be installed to the hard drive will prompt you with a choice of where to put it, so take note and once the game is installed, just change to that directory and run the command that would have displayed at the end of the install. You may also have to run a separate sound setup program, such as SETSOUND.EXE, check the directory once the game you want has been installed.

Information on playing the demo's (keyboard commands, memory requirements etc.) is almost always contained in a README file. Wherever possible we have included a menu button that displays a game's README file, but in some cases that wasn't possible, so if nothing's making sense, look in the game directory for a help file. The

best way to do this is by using a file manager, such as X-Tree, Win 95's Explorer or Seeker - the demo of which is included on the coverdisk.

Feel free to copy an entire game to your hard drive if you want, all games are, naturally enough, in the games directory. Also copy from the CD if the game mysteriously won't install or run, then look in the games' directory for a likely looking file - such as INSTALL.EXE. We have thoroughly tested the CD, but not everything works on every PC the way it ought to.

The latest patches will be included each month, the menu will copy them to a directory called C:POWER, with each patch copying to an appropriately named sub-directory. The menu will tell you where it's copying to, after that it's up to you to look at the patch contents, read the README and apply it to your game.

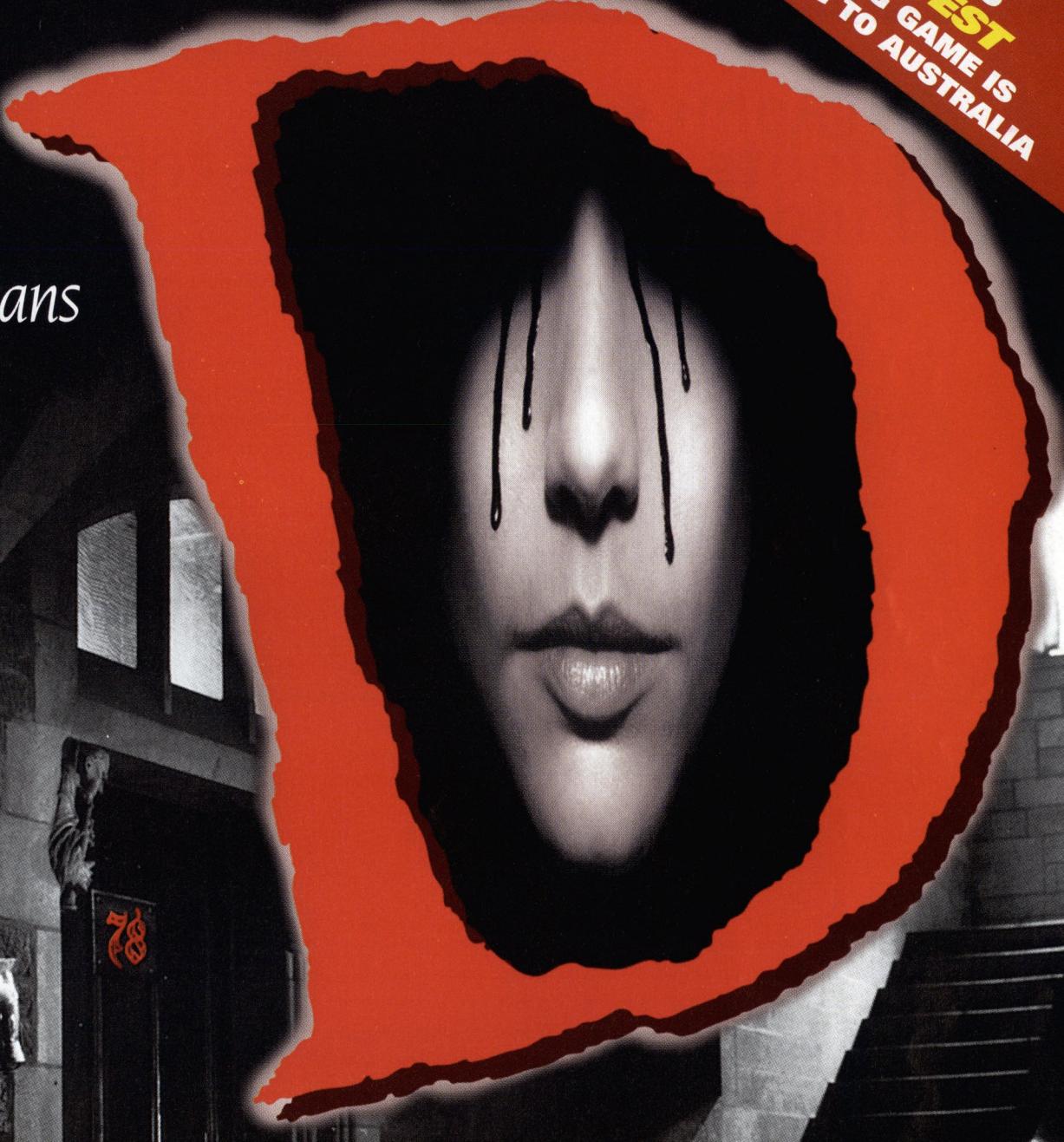
If your disk is clearly faulty (a whopping great gash across the surface should produce an "ERROR READING DRIVE..." message), then send it for free replacement to:

PC PowerPlay
CD Returns.
PO BOX 634
Strawberry Hills
NSW 2012

Unfortunately we're not able to take tech support calls, so if you're really stuck, write in to the above address with details of the problem, including system information and copies of your AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS.

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Mystery means
Visiting the
Dark Pit of
your Soul.*

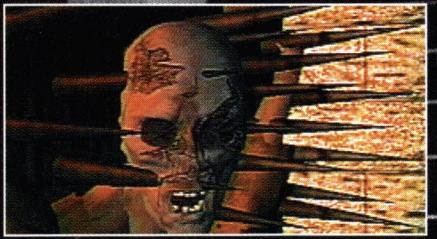


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Graphics At Lightspeed, 3D Boosters Find Their Way

As a PC gamer you are undoubtedly familiar with the financially painful upgrade routine. Hot new games need hot new CPU's and whenever Intel release a new processor they have a guaranteed market with the gaming community. This is about to change, for an exciting new era is about to dawn.

3D accelerator cards are now a reality. When coupled with a reasonably fast CPU, your game machine could well go for years without an upgrade, instead of months or a year at best if you wanted to keep up. As to be expected with news as good as this, there's some bad news almost proportionate in scale. With so many manufacturers rushing to release their own 3D cards, the chance of a common standard has been virtually abandoned. The idea of game developers producing a version of their game for each leading card is ridiculous, but that's the situation we now have. This has to change,

each of the many cards use their own proprietary system to boost graphics speed, a common standard such as the VESA resolution standard is desperately needed.

That won't happen in a hurry, but in the interim there are two factors that ought to boost confidence among potential buyers. One is that coding a game for a particular card isn't looking like the nightmare it was once seen as. As with support for sound cards, games can be built to auto-detect whatever 3D card you have, and configure themselves to run accordingly.

The other hope is Microsoft's Direct3D technology. It's integrated into the Win 95 environment and is part of the family of DirectX API's which allow software to communicate directly with your machine's hardware, instead of being slowed by Windows having to translate video data into something understandable by your particular video card. It works much like the

VESA standard and is being supported by most 3D cards. Direct3D games are only just emerging though, and despite a performance increase beyond anything a standard video card can do, the potential of a card's specific design won't be exploited unless a game is optimised to use it.

Many 3D accelerators are available and more are coming. Creative Labs were first off the block with their 3D Blaster. However, the VLB and PCI bus versions of the card are completely different. The VLB card uses Creative's own chipset and still requires a standard video card in the machine, while the PCI version is a stand-alone solution built around the Verite chip by independent company Rendition.

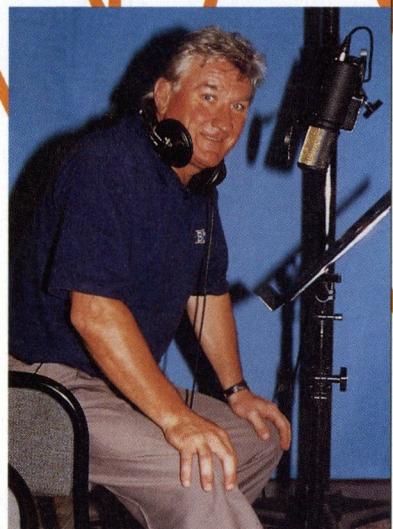
It's a complex situation that needs answers quickly. We'll keep you informed over the months that it needs to sort itself out. Once it does, a new era of high-powered gaming will take shape. About time too.

Ray Gets Into The Game

The Super League fiasco caused problems for just about everybody - including Electronic Arts, who were forced to wait until the court decision before putting the final touches on their Australian Rugby League game, due out in June. Within two days of the official go-ahead, commentator Ray Warren was in the studio recording the voice over for the game. We were there and it was a special experience.

Ray rattled off hundreds of one-liners without seeming to take a breath. With eyes closed it was just like being in the living room watching television, magic it was. Once it all comes together this game should have more voice-over commentary than any other sports sim. Advanced AI will ensure Ray's immortal phrases come in just when they should, making the experience as big as the big game itself is.

As to whether Ray will be playing the game in his spare time is another matter, when asked if he was into games, Ray barked "I'm a Tetris man". Right then.



- Top Ten selling games for April
- 1. Descent 2
- 2. Command & Conquer - Covert Operations
- 3. Wing Commander 4
- 4. Top Gun
- 5. Terminator Future Shock
- 6. EF2000
- 7. Knights Chase
- 8. Terranova
- 9. Command & Conquer
- 10. Indycar 2

Charts by Meghead, 02 415 3355

• Bullfrog are pioneering a brave new marketing technique - giving stuff away free. The update to Hi Octane is available on the net free to anyone who wants it. It's not a patch, it's an upgrade that brings the PC version into line with the Playstation game. Three new tracks, a split-screen mode and other enhancements are part of the upgrade. We applaud and encourage this development.

• Alien Trilogy is due later this year from Acclaim. The 3D action game loosely follows the themes from each of the three movies - slow and suspenseful in the first part, frantic in the second and weird in the third. While not a technological tour de force such as Quake, Alien Trilogy should still be able to hold its head high for cool gameplay.

• Interactive Magic are enjoying a reputation as the only proper combat flight sim maker around at the moment. With Falcon 4.0's innumerable delays it's been up to IM to deliver the goods. Apache Longbow is still the current hot sim, while IM have Hind (similar in structure to Apache, but based on the Russian Mi-24 Hind gun/troopship) and F-16 Fighting Falcon due imminently.

• Sega of America and Softbank have formed a new company to port prime Sega console games to the PC. To be known as Sega Entertainment, the company expects to release 25 titles during 1996.

• The McLaren motorsport team have teamed up with Electronic Arts to produce a racing sim based on the Le Mans race. Players will drive the McLaren F1 GTR, which won just about everything it entered last year. Players will have the choice of a basic arcade mode, or they can play the full simulation mode which allows three, six and twenty four hour races.

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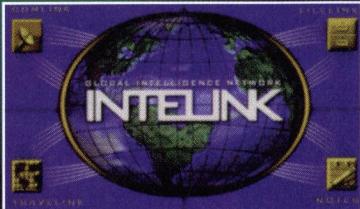
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If you're really serious about racing sims, then you'll really want a Hyper Simulator. This miracle of modern engineering offers a virtual-racing experience that's as close as you can get to the real thing. Developed by former racing driver John Crooke and marketed under the credible banner of Holden Special Vehicles, the device comes in several flavours, budget depending. The basic build-yourself kit clocks in at \$995, then there's the GT for \$2010, which is functionally complete but somewhat spartan. The ones to have are either the Clubsport-S or top-end HRT-S, these cross the line at \$2985 and \$3995 respectively and are seriously delectable gaming peripherals. Constructed from carbon fibre and kevlar, these top-end toys differ only in paintjob and useless but highly appealing accessories like the drink bottle.

The HRT-S includes the com-

plete range of options as standard. That means the rear wing and six-point racing harness, plus other items of lesser usefulness.

Scoffing with derision is a common initial reaction (we did), but one drive will change your mind forever (ours was). The quality is outstanding, from the brake pedal that's sprung slightly heavier than its right-foot counterpart, to the gear change levers set behind the wheel and modelled precisely on the McLaren F1 system. The Clubsport-S and HRT-S also come as standard with the Pro Control steering wheel, which has 12 buttons set in its' centre. The buttons are fully programmable too, but in ways that put Thrustmaster's inconvenient and complicated system to shame. Just press a key in program mode, then hit the button you want it to be and you're done. You can even re-program in



the middle of a game just by pausing first.

The units are designed with a flat surface just ahead of the steering wheel, that's where the monitor is supposed to go, but apparently around half Hyper Simulator's customers prefer to run games through huge TV sets.

Grand Prix 2 and Indycar 2 are the main reasons to consider such a thing as this, although Need for Speed and less intense games could be just as much fun. You'll feel like a bit of a tool sitting in the thing, but will be having so much fun you won't care. For more information call Ron or Will on 03 9265 9500.

If you're uninspired by the constant monotony of 2D viewing, then Stereographics have released a product to save the day. Called the Simuleyes, these 3D shutter glasses offer incredible depth perception and stunning realism.

The Simuleyes VR glasses use Stereographics' LCD shutter technology. The liquid crystal shutters in the glasses rapidly alternate in

Simuleyes Stereo Glasses.

sync with left and right eye views on the computer monitor. The LCD shutters ensure that the left eye sees only the left image, while the right eye sees only the right. This system effectively emulates normal eyesight to restore realistic depth perception.

The installation of the Simuleyes is wickedly simple. There are no cards to install, dip switches to set, or interrupts to adjust, there aren't even any software drivers that need to be installed. By simply plugging into your video card through a control

box, up to four Simuleyes can be used on the same machine.

Shipping with 3 games, Descent Destination Saturn, VR Slingshot, and Wolf 3D, the Simuleyes costs approx \$289 making them the most affordable VR solution on the market.

This product is simply awesome. You'll need a reasonably powerful computer though, as the job of processing video images effectively doubles. Further information at: <http://www.stereographics.com>, or call Todaytech on 1 300 360 022. J.L.



- Riding on Spycraft's considerable hype is modem maker Netcomm. Taking advantage of the game's internet facility, Netcomm are offering a \$50 cash back deal on their Roadster 28,800 modem, plus a five hour free trial of the net with provider Enternet.

- The 8X speed CD ROM is fast becoming the new standard. Creative Pacific include the 8 speed CD ROM in their Performance 8X multimedia kit, which also includes the Sound Blaster 32 PnP (Plug & Play) wavetable card for a very reasonable \$699.

- Maxis, makers of sim-just-about-everything, have bought the company behind the game Full Tilt! Pinball - Cinematronics.

- The 3DO console, like many cutting edge technologies, didn't do too well. It did spawn the fastest 3D chipset on the planet though - the M2 chipset. Matsushita bought the rights to M2 technology a while ago, but nothing yet exists that incorporates the blazing array of 10 graphics co-processors. Now video card manufacturer Cirrus Logic have announced plans to release a PC graphics card which incorporates M2. The yet unnamed card should be out by the end of 1996 and supports Microsoft's Direct3D standard.

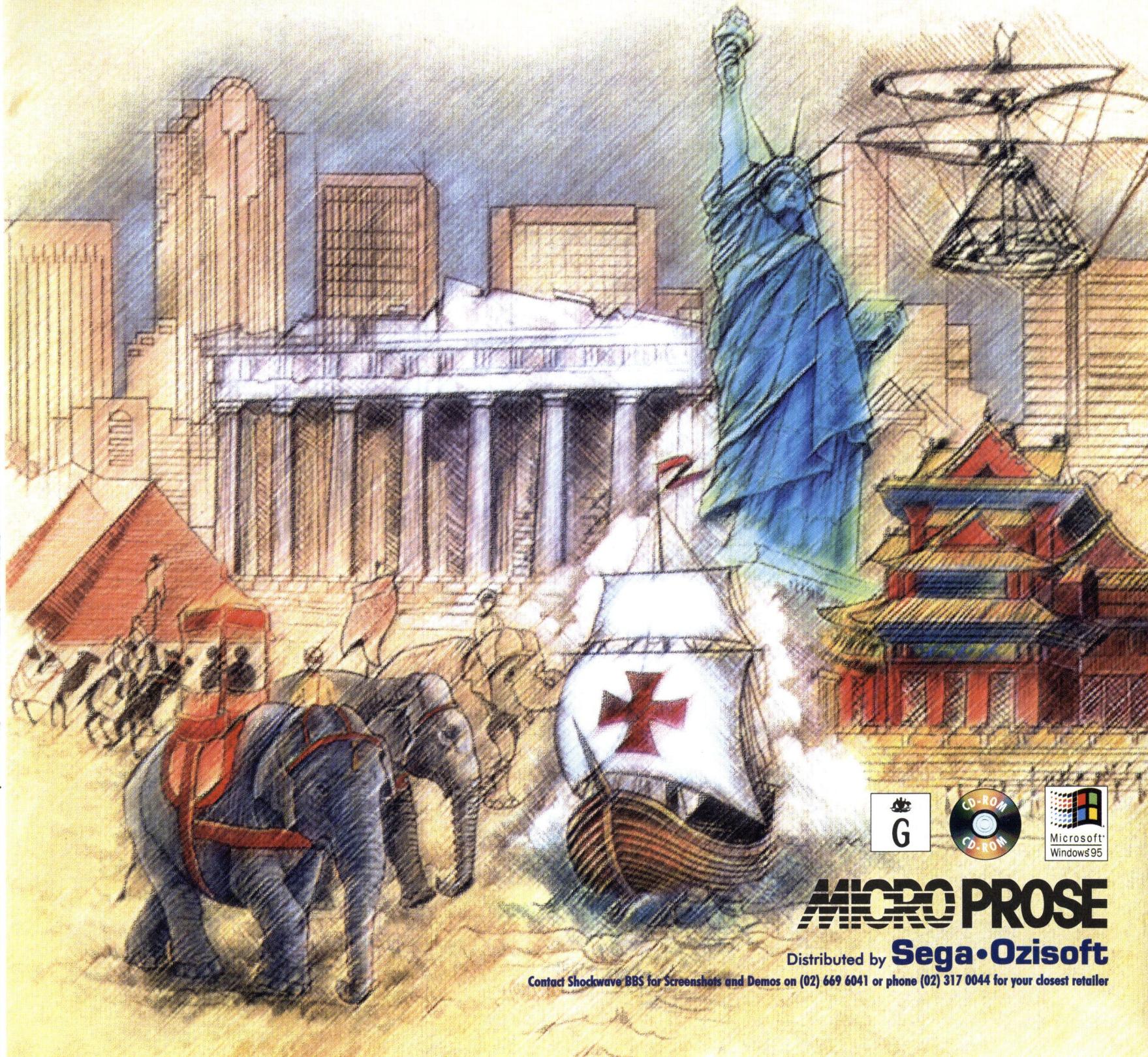
- Quarterdeck, makers of QEMM and saviour of many conventional memory-challenged gamers, have released CD ROM caching software which they claim is perfectly suited to games and multimedia. SpeedyROM (snappy name, eh?) boosts CD access by up to 90%. The good news is that at \$59.95 SpeedyROM looks great when compared to upgrading to a faster drive, the bad news is that it's Win 95 only, with DOS games benefiting only if run within Win 95.

- The office of the Attorney General has released the results of a report they conducted into video games and their potential to cause violence. Amazingly, they found that players tended to focus more on the challenge of the game, rather than its' violent aspects. Naturally one would expect a relaxing of Australia's draconian classification system as a result, however, that would be the sensible approach and common sense hasn't had much of a run since the system began.

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Previews

CORPORATION: OFF WORLD



FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1-8
PUBLISHER	AUSTRALIS MICRO-PROGRAMMING
AVAILABLE	MAY/JUNE

Stategy wargames of the Command & Conquer/Warcraft variety are running hot right now. Many more are coming soon, such as the much delayed "Z", but nobody seems to be pushing the basic concept beyond the groundwork Westwood's Dune 2 laid when it all started.

Australis MicroProgramming are though, and yes, the compa-

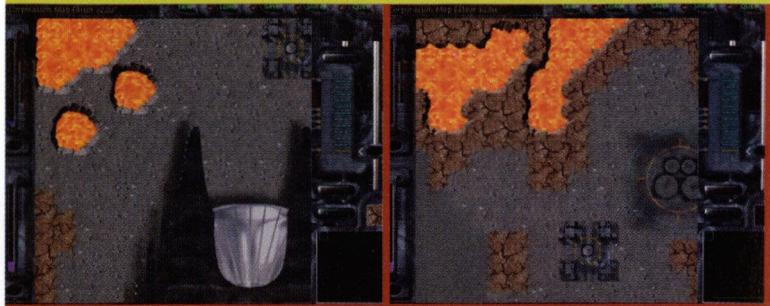
ny name sounds Australian because it is Australian.

The game is due very soon and has all the right stuff to take it to the big time. Game complexity is considerably more intricate than others of the genre, but not at the expense of playability. The basic premise is to manage a deep space mining company, with ground-based tactical combat ensuing whenever there's an excuse for it.

Similar to the brilliant Masters of Orion, Corporation allows customisable units. Three basic modules make up each unit and the 30 or so modules provide for around 5000 combinations that work well in gameplay. Editors will also be included that let you truly individualise graphics and attributes, with future plans to release a add-on containing the best custom units players come up with.

Although presented in the traditional top-down perspective, the game world is true 3D. Line of sight is affected by terrain and

CORPORATION: OFF WORLD



other obstacles, and if an explosion takes out a cliff face the game takes this into account.

Also radically different and just as tantalizing for gamers anxious about this title, is the design of the game engine. Australis point out that most strategy games are effectively over (whether against the computer, or a human opponent), once an even marginal edge in unit quantity and quality has been achieved. To address this they have incorporated a clever balancing act. Your workforce and military are all controlled via a central CPU (a pretend one

in the game, not yours), the more powerful your forces become, the greater the load on the CPU. This means that a numerous and seemingly all-powerful military can be routed by hit and run attacks and minor skirmishes by a far less potent force - but with a less burdened CPU. Unit speed and efficiency are affected detrimentally by a busy CPU, with a comparatively idle one providing its smaller army with potentially match-winning agility.

All this and stunning SVGA graphics should see Corporation: Off World taking the international scene by storm.

ATMOSFEAR "THE THIRD DIMENSION"

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1-6
PUBLISHER	EMG
AVAILABLE	JUNE

The Atmosfear board game is one of those happy Australian success stories. Now comes the video game version, and hopefully for the game's developers it will enjoy similar popularity.

We haven't seen it yet, but going on the screenshots and what we know about the game things aren't looking too bad.

Essentially an adventure game, Atmosfear allows for up to six players, or can be played in

single player mode, with a choice of six characters or "Harbingers" to play as.

The idea is to search the rendered 3D world for six (there's that number again, is there something to all this?) keys. It sounds like a stock-standard adventure game, but apparently the game boasts impressive AI which alters game conditions to keep you on your toes and make each game a truly new one.

Like the original board game, Atmosfear in its latest guise still aims to be a social game, that's a rarity for computer games and we'll be looking closely at this one. Full review PowerPlay #2.



TUNNEL B1



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PREVIEWS

BIG RED RACING

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	RACING
PLAYERS	1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER	DOMARK
AVAILABLE	MAY

We like the name Big Red Racing. It wastes no time getting everything out into the open. It just screams, "I am an unpretentious console-type racer! You'll have a zany, bouncy, jolly time with me! Play once and I'll be your bestest friend ever in the whole wide world!"

It would be partly correct, about the first bit at least. For a start, there's the graphics. Blindingly bright primary and secondary colours abound, though thankfully not to the detriment of your deteriorating eyesight. Despite the lack of acute detail (the road and other objects are great slabs of the one colour, albeit subtly shaded), it still

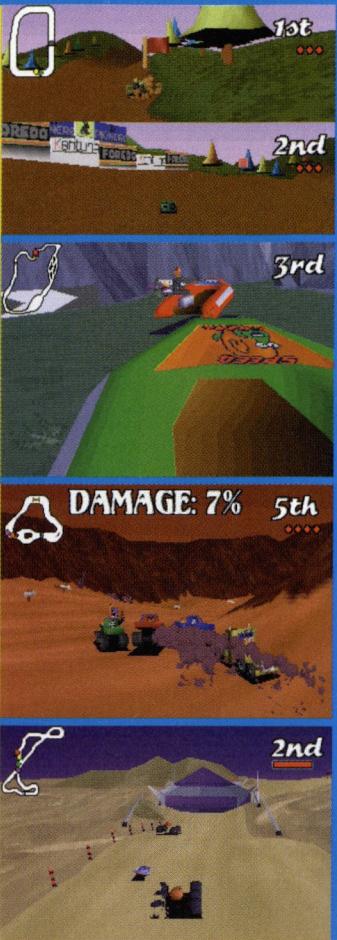
moves a bit slowly. Knock the detail down and things improve, but you end up looking at flat, unshaded polygons constantly looming on the horizon.

The beta version we had a fling with was terrific fun. The cars (and there are loads of them to choose from, many of them not even cars at all - you get to pick from two at the beginning of each race, the selection varying from jeeps, trucks, and buggies to power boats, bulldozers and Minis) get thrown all over the place as they hit the little, or not so little, dips and bumps of which the tracks seem to almost entirely consist. You can view the race from a number of set positions - in the driver's seat, trailing just behind your car, or way up in the air. Better still, using the mouse enables you to swing the view around to any angle you wish, as you continue driving with the

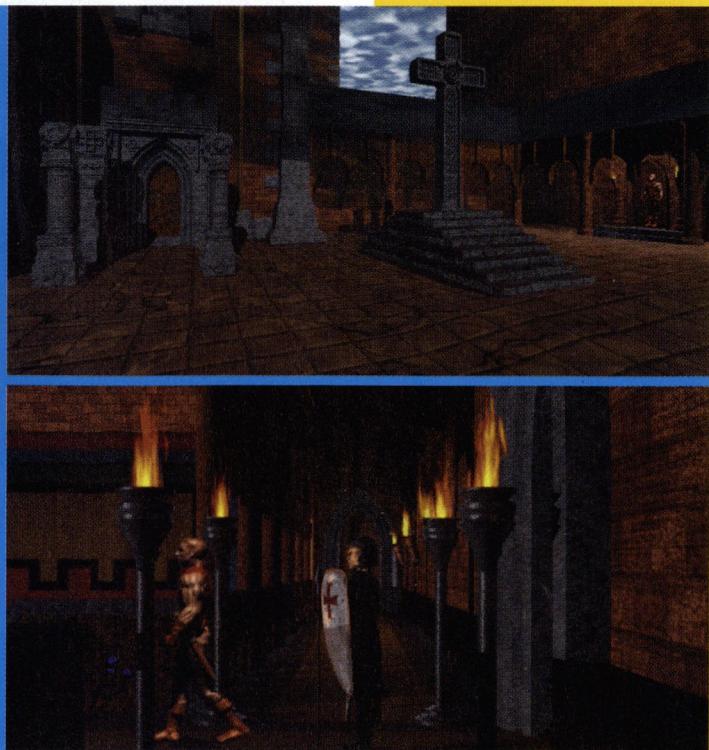
keyboard or joystick. The racing itself is exciting with plenty of side-swiping and overtaking, as well as short-cuts and ramps.

So far, Big Red Racing is well on the road to becoming a 3D Micro Machines, but it isn't quite there yet. On some circuits it is difficult to know exactly where the track is heading, particularly if you're using the "in the driver's seat" view it can get horribly confusing. The way you can drive up steep hills and then bounce back onto the track, possibly on top of your opponents is good, although you can sometimes overturn and it takes years to be put back in the race.

Clear up these small failings and Domark will have a winner on their hands. Leave them in the finished version and they'll catch their heel on the final hurdle, stumble momentarily and limp into a creditable third place. D.W.



CHRONICLES OF THE SWORD



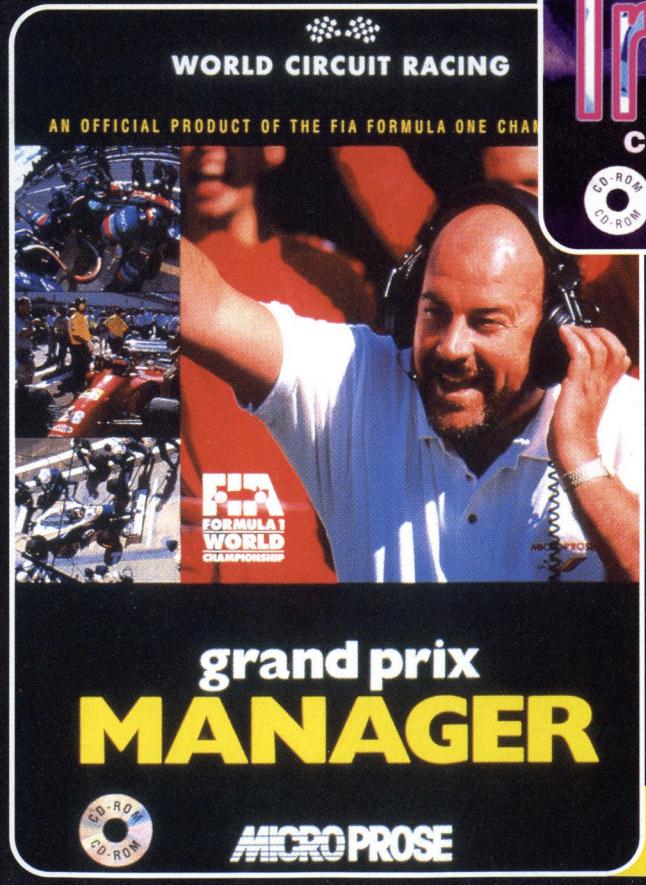
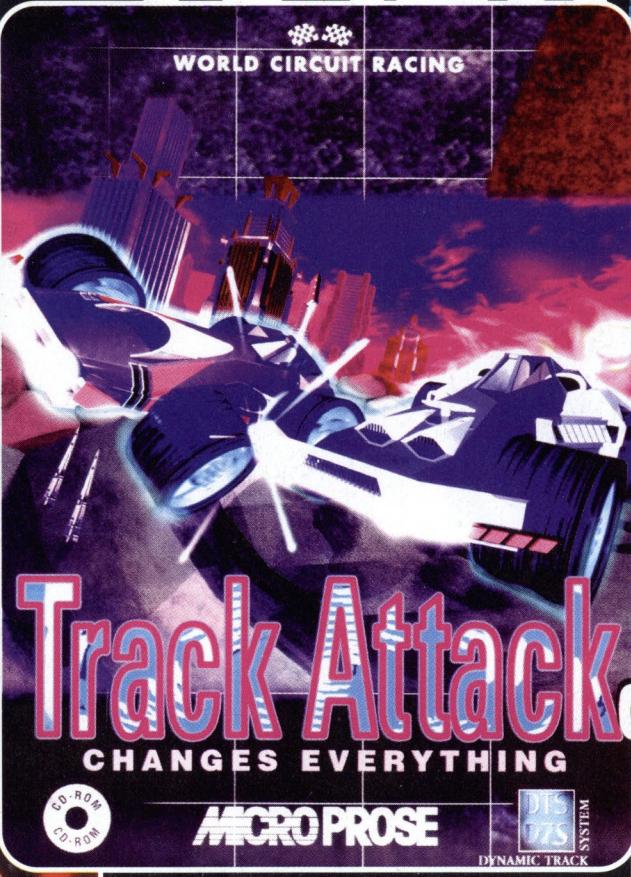
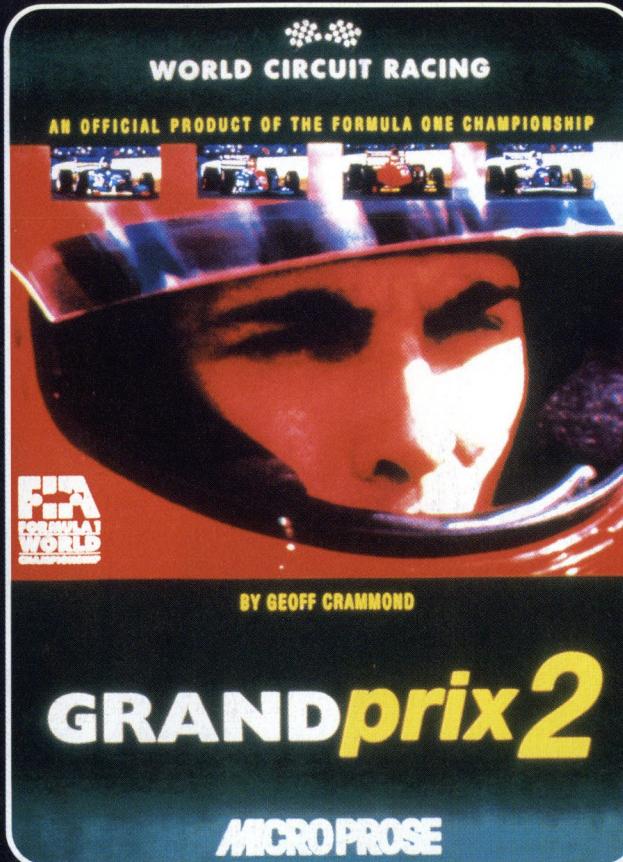
FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	PSYGNOSIS
AVAILABLE	APRIL/MAY

Once a staple of the PC gaming diet, the point-and-click adventure has been marginalised in recent times. Prodded aside to the edge of the plate, say, leaving room for the more exotic cuisine that 3D adventuring offers. Most have suffered with clumsy, unpalatable interfaces; easy, undercooked puzzles; bland, boring storylines; and brussel sprouts. The Dig was quite good, but hardly astonishing. Like chicken.

Synthetic Dimensions (if you've stayed with my laboured food metaphor, you'll realise that name doesn't bode well) hope to

reverse this trend with Chronicles Of The Sword. Set in the mythical Arthurian times in England, Chronicles has you playing the part of the newly-knighted Sir Gawain. King Arthur's sister, Morgana, is the resident megalomaniac who has designs upon the entire land of Camelot. We boldly predict that it could be the task of Sir Gawain to put a stop to her.

One look at the lovely demo of Chronicles is all that's needed to realise that this is no ordinary point-and-click adventure. Each character you meet (including yourself) has been beautifully drawn and rendered, giving them that real, solid, pseudo-3D appearance. And considering the limitations that this applies, the animation is rather good. Hopefully, the plot will be of a similar high standard. D.W.



WORLD CIRCUIT RACING

G

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AFTERLIFE

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	GOD - GAME
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	LUCAS ARTS
AVAILABLE	JUNE

The people at Lucas Arts aren't ones to shy away from an interesting game concept. Afterlife is a 'God' game in the biblical sense, combining elements of the venerable Sim City and Populous titles in a first for a company better known for its graphic adventures and space combat sims. The two planes of heaven and hell are your starting points, a small alien planet sandwiched between them the source of your souls. Souls are your currency in Afterlife, they must be attracted to the planes by building gates to welcome them and then they must be satisfied when they arrive.

If you're wondering how much your soul will be worth on the other side, exactly seven cents will cover it nicely. The gods of Afterlife will give you this amount for every soul you attract, and take it away for every soul that is uninterested in your post-life retirement village. The way to keep your souls happy is to make sure they meet their respective fates, and you do this by zoning 'Fate Structures' to take care of Envy, Sloth, Lust etc. (Hell) and Charity, Temperance and Chastity (?) etc. (Heaven). Once areas are zoned for a particular structure, building will start immediately and develop according to the amount of use it is getting a la Caesar II. Of course there are roads to be built so your souls can get around, various support structures and it is also possible to reincarnate those who

wish to return to life.

The demo of Afterlife provided to us had a rude habit of only allowing play for a short period of time, so it's impossible to make a definitive analysis of its merits but it must be said that, unfortunately, it looks pretty thin from here. There is absolutely nothing like the depth of Sim City or Caesar II. The graphics are underwhelming to say the least and the subject matter, while being interesting at first, soon pales as you're faced with the question "Who really gives a stuff about what happens to dead people anyway?" It's not like you're building an empire or managing a vibrant modern metropolis, just herding around a bunch of stiffies. LucasArts may have just lost the plot on this one, but we'll reserve judgement until we see what the final version is like.

G.S.

ZONE RAIDERS

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	VIRGIN
AVAILABLE	NOW

What do you get when you combine Descent, Doom and Fatal Racing? An awful headache or an awesome game? The main idea behind Zone Raider is your desperate search for parts to repair an old jet that is to be used to escape to the 'Freezone' with your buddies in 'Freedom Flight', a violent gang of ardent revolutionaries. The parts are, of course, scattered all over the place and are defended by all manner of unpleasant geometric jugheads who lurk about in the crevices of the vast, labyrinthine complexes that you must thoroughly explore.

Five hover-vehicles are provided for the task, the hovercraft angle allows the programmers more leeway in designing the layout and feel of the levels and makes possible that most useful of Doom moves, the strafe left and right, it also gives you the feeling of playing a Slipstream 5000 type flight game rather than a driving sim. Hooning up the angled walls of the giant machine buildings, getting huge air and pouncing on top of your opponents is one of the great thrills of Zone Raider and in this respect it is like no other game around. There is the usual weapon and shield power ups to be grabbed, the best blaster we came across fires guided energy bolts at your target and makes a nice mess when it gets there too. Targeting your weapons is automatic with the unfortunate vic-

tim simply having to pass in front of your car to be locked on.

The design of the levels is where the Doominess really gets you. They succeed in creating the same atmosphere of claustrophobic panic, while still allowing enough room for a hotted up Buick to get around without too much trouble. Forget the first level, that's just there to get you used to the game, The second is where the real action starts, combining fast dangerous roadways with a vast angular city full of trouble. Perhaps the graphics of the enemy units could have been a bit more interesting but you're usually too busy to notice anyway! Zone Raider supports the Thrustmaster system and the Flightstick Pro and is, as is usually the case these days, network and modem playable. It looks like a winner.





MASTER OF ANTARES

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	MICROPROSE
AVAILABLE	JUNE/JULY

Master of Orion is revered as one of the great strategy games. Often referred to as "Civilisation in space" due to its focus on advancing technology in order to field a competitive military, MOO, as it's affectionately known, actually bears little resemblance to Civilisation beyond that one common feature. Cities, or their planetary equivalents, can not be individually upgraded beyond sweeping global changes and generalised missile defences. Combat in MOO is for the most part strategic, while Civilisation's is tactical. MOO isn't even by MicroProse (Civilisation's creators) - they publish it, but the developer is SimTex, who also make the marginally less loved Master of Magic.

Now, SimTex are finishing work on what is ostensibly Master of Orion 2, but in fact is a completely new game design which draws strongly on elements from Master of Magic.

and fortuitously has a feel which at last adds credibility to the Civilisation moniker.

Master of Antares still follows MOO's basic premise - the exploration of a flat-plane galaxy, the exploitation of its planets and the conquest of its inhabitants, but considerable depth has been added to previous game aspects and major new factors have been incorporated. Right from the start, playing a new game now lets you totally customize each game. Instead of choosing to play a race with pre-set attributes, you can now build up a custom race that suits your style. Dozens of enhancements are available which make for more variety than most players are ever likely to get from the game. This is a Master of Magic feature, a good one too.

Another MOM (do they choose their game names knowing we will all call them by their far more attractive acronyms?) take-off which bodes well for better gameplay is the need to give a damn about individual officers. That's right, besides micro-managing dozens of different goings-on within many individual game

sphere's, you'll also have to keep egos pleased and skill factors high through carefully managed successes.

Thankfully the horrible interface from MOO has been fixed. It doesn't look much different, apart from the delectable SVGA prettiness, but now it's much friendlier. Like almost everything else in the game, the main screen can be fully personalised. The map itself can be zoomed in or out from, over any area of the galaxy. A radar miniature view of the galaxy is an optional window, this was lacking from MOO and was its single biggest problem (which is a fairly anal concern and speaks volumes for MOO's brilliance).

Combat, as with the original, only really intensifies towards the end of a game. The area of space you'll do battle in is several screens in size now. Ship design is more complex and individual weapons can be boosted by adding one or more of the performance enhancement options.

Master of Antares is a safe bet, its designers have the gift and haven't missed a trick. Count on a major review of this one when it finally shows up.

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The winner will be drawn on June 29 and notified shortly afterwards. The result will appear in the August edition of PC PowerPlay.

Worth Over Four Thousand Dollars!

STEVE DAVIS' VIRTUAL SNOOKER

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	SNOOKER SIM
PLAYERS	1-4
PUBLISHER	INTERPLAY
AVAILABLE	MAY

As publicans didn't have enough to worry about already, with the decline of teenage alcoholism and increasing popularity of recreational sports drink abuse cutting into their ever dwindling profits. Now Interplay have come along and given people even less reason to go down to their local for a quick one by threatening to release this excellent Snooker simulation. Virtual Snooker, blessed as it is by the great Steve Davis, is a surprisingly addictive game.

The interface has a very solid feel and couldn't possibly

be easier to use, while still allowing for all the intricacies of the sport. The mouse is used in conjunction with various keystrokes to aim, position and shoot, all quickly and intuitively and for those of you who've only ever played Snooker's poorer cousin, Pool, there's a complete set of rules and strategy tips so you don't make a goose of yourself. The table dynamics are perfect, I didn't see one dodgy bounce or deflection during the quite considerable time I played. Just as importantly, the superb audio really gives the game an extra edge, you can almost feel the impact of the balls because of the crisp, lifelike thwack noises they make. The preview version that we saw was only half finished so it's impos-

sible to give you a full run down of the game's features but there will be lots of video to spice up the brew, and also various exotic locations for your virtual table.

So why bother going to the pub and enduring those long waits for a table, or the bunch of idiots in the corner wearing K-Mart brand 'street wear' who've put so much money in the jukebox that the Choir Boys 'Run To Paradise' plays non stop for twelve hours? Because of the atmosphere? Hell, block out your windows, spew on the carpet and invite all the single mothers from the local day care centre around to sit in your lounge room and talk about their ex-boyfriends, while you play this excellent game in the solitude of your bedroom. G.S.



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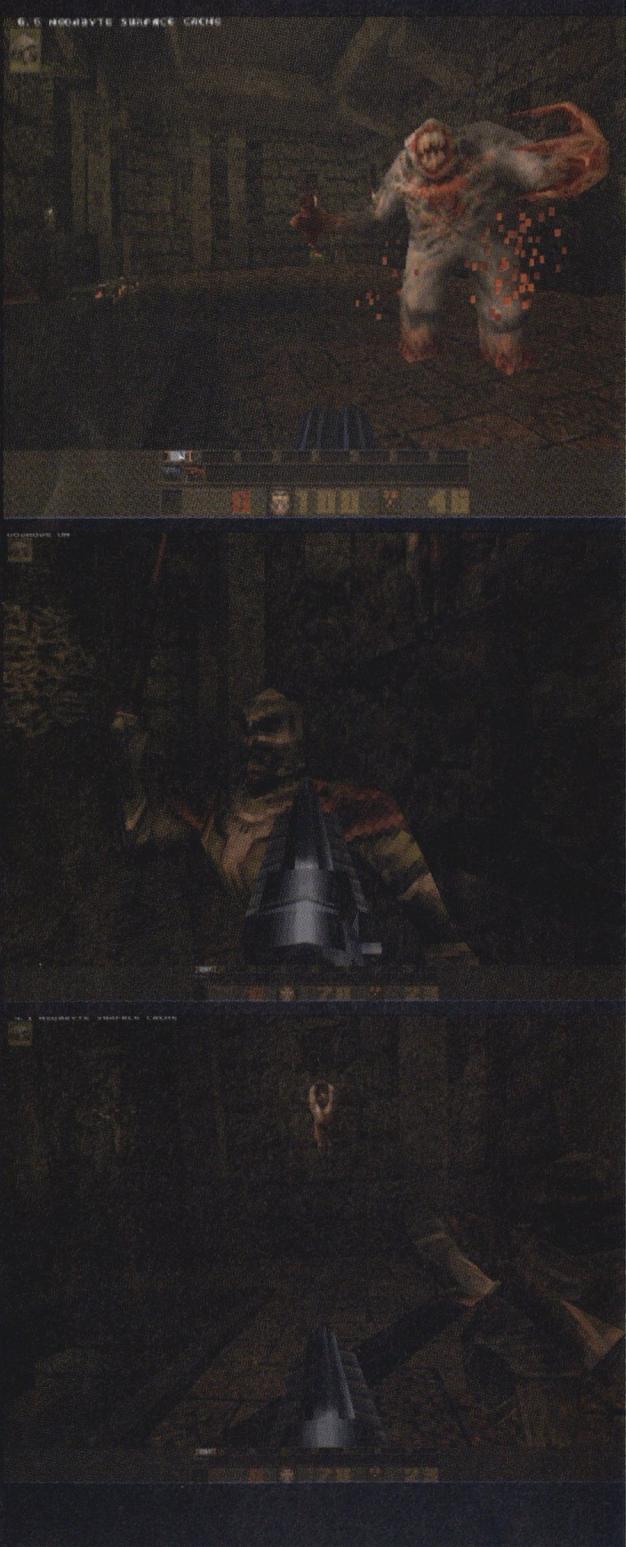
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THE EARTH AT

QUAKE NEEDS TO BE VERY SPECIAL TO LIVE
GOING ON THE PRIMITIVE DEATH
THINGS ARE LOOKING GOOD.



FORMAT	CD ROM/NET MULTIPLAY
AVAILABLE	BY XMAS
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	TBA
PUBLISHER	id SOFTWARE

Few words stir a gamer's heart like "Quake" does. Having conquered the world with Doom, id Software have been busy lads of late, alternating between taking phone calls from their Ferrari mechanics and knocking up another masterpiece. Great expectations have been placed on id, but whatever form Quake takes, it will surely disappoint some, just as it will unconditionally please most of the rest of us. A visit to the action games newsgroup on the internet shortly after ANY new 3D game is released shows heated debate. All new games are compared to Quake, despite the fact that until recently nobody outside id actually knew anything about it. This ridiculous situation reached new heights after the Duke Nukem 3D demo appeared, the "Duke vs. Quake" threads ran for many screens and were largely composed of meaningless and parochial posturing.

Then, two weeks later, id blew everyone away by releasing an unusual form of demo onto the net. It was a deathmatch only, three level, monsterless game world, but it was Quake. We could walk around inside it, touch the walls and live inside the legend. Whether id released the deathmatch demo to steal Duke Nukem 3D's thunder will remain known only to id, but the end result is that we got a look at Quake sooner than we'd expected.

The demo is both primitive and immensely impressive. On the primitive scale, the 3D engine is not fully optimised for speed and as mentioned before, is a barren place for all but network equipped multi-players. Or at least that ought to have been the case, but being Doom's big brother, Quake was natural prey for hackers. It didn't take long at all, within two days of deathmatch Quake's appearance

a tired and gifted hacker had released a patch that set free the monsters that were embedded in the code. Again, whether id intended this to be discovered will remain their secret, but the assumption has to be that either they planned on this happening, or simply, someone stuffed up big-time.

The hackers continued relentlessly. By day three a basic level editor was posted and on day four, a texture editor allowing tailor made wall and object textures. At the time of writing, only two weeks have passed since deathmatch Quake was released, but 57 known editors/utilities and custom levels have already been posted. Among them are editors of increasing user-friendliness, patches that allow modem play, weapons modifications, new sounds and levels, as well as texture patches that change the look of deathmatch characters to the likes of Boba Fett, the Terminator, the Predator, Henry Rollins and naturally, the original Doom space marine among many others. And they're still coming. This is insane, this is fantastic.

While the game itself isn't expected until the end of the year, it's clear that id will sell every CD they care to press. Ostensibly a network/modem game, Quake will still offer probably the greatest one player action experience yet. Something for everyone, in other words. Here's what we know so far:

- Quake may not, in fact, be called "Quake". A German company has the word copyrighted, so id may have to think of another cool sounding yet meaningless name.
- Get used to simultaneous mouse and keyboard control. Holding the "\\" key allows the mouse to control the viewpoint, while the engine supports and encourages the Logitech 3-button standard. Word from inside id is that this is the only way to play, unless you master this skill, you're meat.
- The lightsourcing will be less sophisticated than expected. No realtime shadows or weapon-based effects (like Dark Forces' laser lighting up dark halls).

QUAKES LAST!

UP TO THE HYPE.
MATCH BETA id RECENTLY RELEASED,

- Enemy AI vastly superior to Doom's.

Instead of mindlessly pursuing, monsters will attempt to cut you off by heading around the back way to wherever you'd retreated.

- Versions for DOS, Win 95, LINUX, NeXT, IRIX and MAC.

- Fully programmable joystick support, including using the hat on CH and Thrustmaster sticks for looking around.

- Accurate death physics - sneak up behind and kill with one point-blank range shot, dismemberment and accurately placed body wound graphics.

- Support for microphone communication in deathmatch through the soundcard - possibly with volume proportional to distance within the game environment.

- Unlike Duke Nukem 3D, Quake won't allow bullet holes on wall surfaces.

- Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails fame is doing the sound effects, but there won't be a music soundtrack.

- Players can move and stand on dead bodies. Blood splatters realistically.

- So many resolution modes that Quake will be configurable for just about any PC - so long as it's a DX2/66 or higher.

- Attributes for the game world's physics can be altered, such as reducing gravity to enable huge leaps or increasing friction to slow things down.

The Quake world will be medieval, with rambling castle-style architecture.

Incongruously though, high-tech weaponry like grenade and rocket launchers are in there too. None of this matters much, Quake probably won't have a plot to speak of. The id philosophy is simply that the game world should be complex, but not the controls or devices.

This isn't a role playing game, it's a fully 3D environment (Duke Nukem 3D isn't) that encourages and rewards combat prowess. Playing deathmatch Quake is a far more absorbing experience than Doom (bless it) ever was. We'll keep you posted on Quake news as it develops.

B.M.



DUKE NUKEM

PREVIEW

LET

WITH KILLER 3D GRAPHICS AND
A WICKED SENSE OF HUMOUR,
RIGHT NOW AND IT'S NOT HARD TO



FORMAT	CD ROM/FLOPPY
AVAILABLE	MID MAY
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	1-8
PUBLISHER	APOGEE/3DREALMS
PRICE	TBA
RATING	MA15+

Not often does a game's release have the impact enjoyed by Duke Nukem 3D. Within 24 hours of the six-level shareware version appearing on the net, almost half a million downloads took place, and this was in the U.S. alone! The rest of the world were similarly stricken.

Duke pulls all the important game elements together for this type of game. It's got Tekwar's believable real-world architecture, but with the fiendishly brilliant level design that made Dark Forces such a great play. It's got Doom's dirty, bloody terror-inducing feel that cultivates that special survival instinct missing from most 3D action games. It's also got a sense of humour, but while it's obvious at times that parts of the game aren't meant to be taken seriously, it still never loses the ever-present feeling of imminent death. Great stuff!

Duke does have a background and plot, but like all games of this genre these should be soundly disregarded. For the record, Duke 1 and 2 had our hero taking on evil alien scum off-world, in this third instalment Duke takes the fight to Earth and the game shifts up a gear from the 2D scrolling platform style to the 3D first-person mode we like best.

The full 28 level commercial release is due late April/early May. It'll include nine weapons, as opposed to the shareware's six. This is something to look forward to, as the firepower you're able to pack in the game is extreme. The most versatile and original weapon, in the shareware version at least, is the pipe bomb. You can lay as many as you want, wherever you want, detonating them

all simultaneously at the right time. Faced with a room full of beasties? Just lay a few pipe bombs along the entrance corridor, pop in for a quick hello, then retreat and detonate as they pursue. Fantastic if slightly unfair fun against the computer, a hysterical game winner in multi-player mode. Other shareware weapons include a shotgun that looks, sounds and reloads cooler than any other previous shotty. Duke's chaingun too is a funky twin-barrel job with a devastating rate of fire. When the commercial version is released we'll be able to play with even neater toys, they are: a Shrink Ray (!), Laser Gun and a wall mounted laser trip bomb.

The attention to detail is staggering. You can be facing a wall when a few shots ring out, bullet holes appear in the wall in front of you and blood splats against the wall, before slowly dripping down as you watch. Your blood. Fleeing from the scene, you look down to see a giveaway trail of bloody footprints - yours again. Bathroom mirrors cause a minor heart attack the first time you see your reflection, don't recognize it for what it is and open up with a lethal but embarrassingly pointless hail of fire.

Other cool features abound, there's the HoloDuke which you can activate to fool enemies while you attack from an unsuspecting direction. Security monitors provide surveillance of distant areas and can be used for remote detonation of previously laid pipe bombs. All up, this is one seriously device-packed game, but not for the sake of it - everything makes sense and fits in perfectly.

Duke 3D is also, as the name implies, a true 3D world. Well, almost. Enemies are still 2D sprites, as are most usable objects within the game. The level design however, is 3D. Unlike Doom, the Duke game engine doesn't have a problem with rooms directly on top of each other. This allows for brilliant level design - something players will be able to dabble with courtesy of the level and texture

3D SROCK!

DUKE IS THE HOTTEST GAME IN TOWN
SEE WHY...

editor that will be included on the commercial CD. Doom's engine has been described as being 2.5D, Duke's is said to be 2.75D. Quake in contrast, is full 3D.

Comparing the two is something that's getting out of hand. Quake is a deadly serious, full-on game world, while Duke is colourful, amusing and more inclined towards pure fun, as opposed to Quake's more intensely serious approach.

Entering the bar on the Red Light District level is a case in point, the dank club atmosphere and dancing girls sum up Duke's attitude perfectly (as well as raising the ire of many who see video games as a danger to society), as does the video running on the bar TV showing O.J. Simpson's famous white Ford Bronco run.

Any reasonable PC can run Duke too, which is a refreshing change from tradition. The low-end 320 x 200 mode looks a lot better than it ought to and runs perfectly on a DX2/66. A little further up the scale is the marginally better 320 x 400 mode, which needs a DX4/100 or P75. The top resolution of 800 x 600 is acceptably smooth on a P90, and silky on a P133, as you'd expect.

Duke Nukem 3D arrived just as first-person action games were becoming passe, it's injected new life into the genre and surprised just about everyone. Overflowing with detail - none of which is self-serving, Duke offers gameplay that'll both terrify and delight. Watch for a full review of the complete game in PowerPlay #2.

B.M.

As wonderful as the shareware version of Duke Nukem 3D is, it's still a buggy affair. Thankfully Apogee have released a comprehensive patch that provides more stable gameplay and adds a host of new features. It also offers compatibility with many previously unsupported sound cards and other devices. Unfortunately, it appeared too late to include on the cover CD, but if you're net-connected, you can grab the patch from <http://hyperactive.com>



Scott Miller has done it all - and he's still a sprightly 34! He is both founder and President of Apogee. He went to school in Alice Springs, where he learnt programming and somehow found time to get a black belt in Karate. Scott worked in games shops, wrote game reviews and now steers Apogee and 3D Realms towards even bigger things. This is a man we wanted to talk to, so we did...

You've been in the games industry pretty much from the beginning, seen trends come and go and other companies rise and fall, is there any common thread you've seen that separates successful games developers from the wanna-be's?

The successful companies create games from the bottom of their organization. It's not a team of high-level managers or the marketing department determining which game to create next - it's got to come from the developers themselves. Only if a game's seed is from the developers will they really care

about its growth, and have the necessary passion to make it the best.

Also, too many games are released before they're polished, possibly because they need to be released on a certain date such as Christmas, or because the budget has run dry. Our philosophy is to never let an arbitrary date dictate when we release a game.

You pioneered the "multi-chapter" shareware marketing method with Apogee. It's now a common approach for many companies, such as id and Epic Megagames. Was it a nervous time when you first tried this technique? Was there opposition within your company to what effectively amounts to giving away a sizable proportion to your hard work?

When I released Kingdom of Kroz as shareware in 1987, it was just me - I was Apogee. I have a marketing background, so the idea of releasing one episode, which advertised the remaining game, seemed quite obvious to me. I had no fear in this technique working or not because at the time I held a well paying job at a computer consulting company. I was truly surprised at how well Kroz sold, though, especially when authors of other shareware games - better games, in my opinion - kept telling me that they were not making any money. My multi-episode method, now called the "Apogee model" in the shareware industry, was the difference maker. I quickly knew I had struck gold.

Wolfenstein 3D established a new genre in gaming, was the first genuinely scary video game and is still being played today on just about every conceivable platform. Developing it must have been an exciting experience...

This was almost the game that never was. Id Software didn't want to do it. I had to convince them, with guaranteed royalties, that a 3D shareware game would be successful. Another tidbit that's not well known is that the original design of the game was much more strategy oriented, with guards that had to be searched, and other game-slowng RPG elements. We convinced id that this was the wrong approach and to make it a pure action-fest, stripping away all of the game slowing RPG aspects.

I always knew, if done right, Wolfenstein

3-D would be a flagship game for Apogee, and help lift us to a new level. It did. The game made so much money that the id members bought \$100,000+ sports cars and nice houses. Apogee quickly grew to 50+ people.

How amicable was the departure of the id lads? Do you keep in touch?

There are no hard feelings whatsoever. In fact, one key id employee jumped to Apogee (Tom Hall), we often visit each other (our offices are only a few miles apart), play paintball together and share ideas, etc. Id simply did the smart thing after the success of Wolf and became their own self-sustaining company.

How did you feel when you first saw Doom?
Well, I saw the game over the entire development, so I knew it would be huge. Not even id knew it would be as big as it became!

First-person action games are now considered just that, no longer are they "Doom clones"...

Tell that to the American press.
...being respected in their own right seems a short lived phenomenon though, now first-person games are rated in terms of how they stack up to Quake, even though it hasn't been released. It's a natural tendency to compare similar products, but it must bug you...

Psychologically-speaking, it's natural for people to attach one experience to another. In fact, that's the basis for how memory works - we all need a reference. So, when every single review of a POV (point of view) action mentions "DOOM-clone" it's to be expected - the reviewers are simply falling prey to natural instincts, like we all do. In short, it doesn't bug us at all.

What's the story with Fury3, Microsoft's version of Terminal Velocity?

Microsoft apparently contacted Terminal Reality, the makers of both games, and had a secret deal with them while we were working on Terminal Velocity. I can't comment too much on this because it's all second hand information.

The most striking difference between Fury3 and Terminal Velocity is how much faster TV runs in its native DOS environment,

ME FREAK... OGEE'S FOUNDER AND CEO...

when compared to Fury3's almost unbearable frame rate and scratchy sound that it inflicts upon Win95 users. This seems to be a pretty clear indication that Win95 isn't as perfect for games as Microsoft would have us believe...

Exactly. DOS is still the fastest environment to run games. Windows 95 is the most convenient - that's the difference.

On Win95, what's your opinion and Apogee's position?

It's merely a stepping stone to Windows NT, a true 32-bit operating system. Because Win95 is still cross wired with 16-bit code, it's a bit of a mess to work with. Overall, though, it's much better than Windows 3.x.

To put it mildly, Duke Nukem 3D is utterly fantastic. The interaction that's possible with the game environment blew us away, as did the innovative approach to the general theme. It looks like a LOT of work went into it...

Two years and 12+ developers. This is only our second in-house game (after Rise of the Triad), which is where we're moving now - towards in-house development where we can control the quality. External developers are often difficult to deal with and we have less quality control over external projects.

Is the development of dynamically accurate light-sourcing and true 3D characters the last leap forward in 3D games? Do we have any other forms of technical trickery to look forward to?

There are many big and small improvements still to come that will affect the game world's realism. We're working on two 3D games that both go beyond Quake in significant ways (which I don't want to reveal at this stage).

What's next for Duke Nukem 3D? Will you be releasing new episodes?

Almost certainly we'll release a new set of levels before Xmas. After that, we're not sure if the next Duke Nukem will use a technically superior version of the current engine, or jump to true 3D. It's just too soon to know - we're focused on getting the full game done.

You licensed the 3D "Build" engine to Capstone for Tekwar. It's a totally realistic

environment as opposed to Duke, which sacrifices a little reality in the interests of a good joke here and there. Your forthcoming titles seem to take the same approach, with voodoo dolls as weapons and opponents heads you can kick around after they've been severed. Tekwar seemed a little dry, while Duke is pure good fun, how do you decide which is the right approach? We simply do what we think is fun. Absolute realism doesn't always make for interesting gameplay - we always let gameplay win over realism if the two are opposed. TekWar could have been better, but I think they released the game too early, trying to make it our for Christmas. I bet Capstone does a better job with the TekWar sequel. Capstone is a great company, but a little too marketing driven.

You drew a very fine line with the dancing girls in Duke 3D, we think it's a hoot, but it barely scraped through our censorship board. Were you conscious of the potential controversy during development?

Of course! In fact, at one point we were going to have topless dancers, but then we heard that too many stores would not carry it. We tried to get as close to the line as possible.

Quite simple, Duke and many future games from us, will be adult-oriented. We're not interested in the kid's market anymore. We want to design games that would interest us. The movie industry has adult movies, it's time for our industry to have adult games. We're perfectly willing to forfeit the younger market.

What else is in the pipeline for Apogee/3D Realms?

Shadow Warrior, Blood, Prey and Mad Murdoch (tentative title) are coming from 3D Realms, so you can count on them all being high-end 3D action games. Apogee has Balls of Steel (from an Australian developer, Wildfire Studios), which is a pinball game with a hard core attitude (no wimpy circus or zoo themes), and Stargunner (another Aussie team!), which is the first rendered shooter, and blows away Raptor or anything else I've seen on the PC. The reason we're working with these two Australian groups is because they have outstanding talent. In both cases they contacted us with a game proposal and demo, which earned our interest.

Apogee also has Hispeed, a top-down 3D racing game with combat options (we love combat in all of our games!), and a Duke Nukem side-scroller that brings back Duke's first nemesis, Dr. Proton, and uses rendered characters including the same Duke model seen in Duke 3D. That's it. We have recently dropped several projects because we want to focus on fewer games and make sure they're all awesome and innovative.

Your company seems to have a well balanced solution to game styles, Apogee keeps knocking up great little arcade games, while 3D Realms tackle the flashy epic games. Any plans for further divergence down the track?

Apogee's slogan is "Apogee means Action!" and that pretty much sums it up. We're not interested in simulations, RPGs, puzzle games, etc. Although we've deviated from this in the past, we will not do so in the future - we're much more focused now than ever.

3D Realms Entertainment is a division of Apogee that will only release the most cutting-edge 3D games. Nothing else.

What's Apogee's position on the new 3D cards, such as the 3D Blaster and Edge 3D? We're looking into them. Quite frankly, our coming games, like Prey, are so sophisticated, that using these cards might hurt performance. So there's a lot to sort out before we support any of these.

Do you still get a kick out of playing these games yourself, or has the jaded, "seen it all before" syndrome taken its toll?

I have my favourites, like Stargunner, Duke Nukem 3D, Realms of Chaos and others. But usually after mastering a game I rarely go back to it.

What games do you like to play for fun? Is there anything from other companies that particularly impresses you?

I like platform games and shooters, and there are not many good ones for the PC. The invasion of racing games and fighting games in the arcades have really ruined it for me. Lately, Tyrian and Future Shock have been enjoyable, but not much else. I'm very hard to please you know!

Diversions



THE MUPPETS CD

PUBLISHER	STARWAVE
AVAILABLE	NOW
PRICE	\$69.95
RATING	G

First off, we're not going to make a habit of covering kid's products, PowerPlay just isn't that sort of magazine (we hope you'll be pleased to hear). That said, this CD is fantastic!

For some reason, here at Next Publishing we get sent most of the kid's software releases, where they end up is best not said, but what we will say is that this is by far and away the best kid's CD ever. It's another one from Starwave, who are clearly big on polished quality. From the intro onwards (the Muppets Song with new words - "it's time to boot the hard drive..."), the experience is a knockout. Many different games are included, including our favourite, The Swedish Chef's

Kitchens of Doom, where instead of using chainsaws and shotguns for self-defence, egg beaters and icing dispensers are used for protection against giant carrots and the like.

The idea is to move from one game to another on the Data Bus (funny eh?), once a game is completed you (the kids we mean, of course) travel on to a different game. All your (their) favourite Muppets get their own section, with colourful full-screen FMV and cool but friendly graphics. Some segments are highly amusing for kids and parents alike, but face it, whatever Dr Honeydew and Beaker do is generally hilarious, so this is one safe purchase.

If you've got kids or know someone similarly inflicted, get them this CD. Then, later, when nobody's looking, grab it for yourself and sneak off.

EASTWOOD

PUBLISHER	STARWAVE
AVAILABLE	NOW
PRICE	\$79.95
RATING	G

Clint Eastwood seems to be viewed by most with either admiration or indifference, actual dislike of the actor is rare, which is why this CD ROM biography should do well. Regardless of how you feel about Clint, this CD is of such high quality that even the indifferent segments of the community should enjoy it. Interactive biographies are usually sloppy pieces of work, compiled lazily from scanned magazine photographs and a token smattering of useful information. This is very different, the films are sensibly divided into categories by genre, each category has a fantastic menu that runs horizontally across a couple of

screens, with very Monty Python style graphics for selecting the film you want to know more about. Click on the guy standing on a gravestone, with noose around neck, and he falls down comically to the cry of "Blondieeee!". This, of course, is The Good, The Bad and The Ugly.

You can watch choice segments from most of Clint's movies - including a classic cameo appearance on Mr Ed, then read up on it while listening to the movie's soundtrack. Most of Clint's movie soundtracks seem to be included too, which is value enough. Interviews with the man are naturally included, along with an impressive booklet.

This exquisite two-CD biography will send Eastwood fans ballistic with joy, normal folks should enjoy it too. A very professional piece of work.

EASTWOOD



The Man with No Name's expert shooting saves Tico from the hangman's noose.

Detective Ben Shockley delivers witness Gus Mally to City Hall.

Above: Eastwood in action, the foyer menu and a choice scene from The Gauntlet. Top Left: The Muppets, Beaker and Dr Honeydew and the Data Bus.



SMASHING TWO HEADS
IS BETTER THAN ONE!



THE JURY BELIEVES IN
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT!



THE VERDICT IS NO MERCY!

WEB OF CONFUSION!



NO SYMPATHY
FOR THE SYMBIOTES!

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW

MARVEL
COMICS

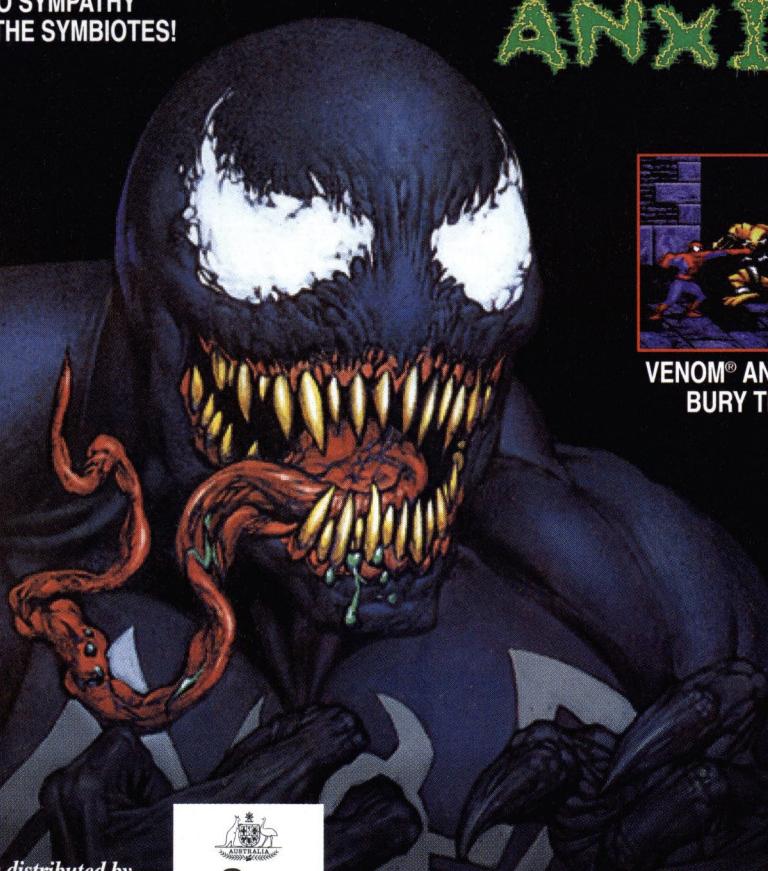
Venom® Spider-Man® SEPARATION ANXIETY



VENOM® AND SPIDER-MAN®
BURY THE DIGGERS



FIVE
TIMES
THE
CARNAGE!



Venom® has been violently split from his living costume, spawning five deadly alien Symbiotes. In fierce two player action. Venom joins forces with arch-enemy, Spider-Man®, to face the new strain of evil brought to life by chilling computer-rendered graphics. Between the merciless Jury and awesome allies like Ghost Rider and Daredevil, Venom's out to part his Symbiote offspring.

Windows 95

SNES®

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LOW LEVEL VIOLENCE

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A FORCE THE EMPEROR OF LUCASARTS



Jack Sorenson is the president of LucasArts. He knows more than most about the business of running a games company. We caught up with Jack during his recent Sydney visit...

LucasArts was started with a large cash contribution from Atari, who aren't doing as well as they'd like right now. Are they still connected with LucasArts and what do you make of their current situation?

That's a long time ago! It pre-dates me. Atari's involvement was actually completely gone by the time they failed that first time, when the original system went under. The whole relationship with Atari was pretty much dead by then, there's been no relationship with them since then. I don't have much of an opinion of Atari, never gave much hope to the Jaguar. It's a fascinating system, but they never had the money to compete with Nintendo and their product mix, it was a valiant effort but pretty much doomed from the beginning.

LucasArts are probably most famous for having both the industries best adventure games and exclusive use of the characters and themes from the Star Wars universe. Why is it then, that the two have never been combined and we've never seen a Star Wars adventure game?

One of the reasons why is that Star Wars works so well as an action property, unlike a lot of other properties obviously. If you look to the essence of Star Wars it's about action story, it's not about action adventure so much, that's sort of a sub-set. If you look to Indiana Jones a lot of people would look at it primarily as an action film, but really it's much more about action adventure, that's why we've done two Indy adventure games because it seems to fall into that classic thing of go around and dig up stuff and move on, that's Indy. But all I can say is that Star Wars is being looked at in all kinds of new genres right now. We've done a lot of the more obvious action genres with Star Wars, so it's time to explore some other sides to it.

And whatever George Lucas does in the future is your material for new games?

Oh yeah, we have total access and exclusivity to the property.

The late 80's saw a spate of relatively simple WWII flight sims like Battlehawks and Their Finest Hour from LucasArts, Dynamix also had their Aces series going strong but lately there's been almost nothing from anyone. Do you plan to resurrect this type of combat sim, or any other for that matter?

You know, I've been talking about this for the last half-year, I just don't know what's happened to the flight category, it used to dominate! They've totally dropped off the face of the Earth. I guess it all depends on what you want to call a flight sim, the thing with us is that Larry Holland, whose the designer for all of those with us, has shifted his resources over to the Star Wars side and I'm not sure if he wants to go back. The biggest reason is that he doesn't have to deal with reality, we still consider flight sims because to us they are an approach to gaming, rather than simulating anything in particular. If anyone thinks they're simulating what it's like to fly a B-52, it's a bunch of crap, come on, it's still a game!

Chris Roberts (Origin's Wing Commander producer) told me he hated doing Strike Commander, preferring the make-believe world of Wing Commander instead of meeting all these stringent requirements... Yeah, Larry had the same problems, you get all these letters and comments on the net and stuff and people go "it isn't just like that" and that's a pain, but actually the very truth to it is that reality's boring, if you want reality the go do it yourself! Don't try and get it out of a computer game...

But how many of us can actually fly combat in an F-16 for real?

Yeah, I'm glad to hear that Chris said that, Strike Commander is the epitome of the problem inherent in it, you're firing at things ten miles away. He actually did the smartest thing by following the missile so you get some sense of accomplishment of the kill, but there's nothing real about that at all, he's trying to add drama and a real gaming element to it, to something that is inherently dull.

Well, a lot of people might disagree with you about the dull part...

I'm just saying that it might be a little too localised, a very small audience, but the true

simulators like Microsoft Flight Simulator should be built as just raw simulators and doing what they're supposed to do. If you want to have a real jet simulator then it should never go into combat, that would be more realistic, that's what it's like, they go through extensive training and that should be the entire thing. Maybe right at the end you go into Desert Storm or whatever, but that's reality! Is that a game? I don't think so.

The Monkey Island games are generally regarded as the finest adventure games ever, any chance of a continuation?

We've been talking about it for years. We've got about a dozen Monkey stories that we've looked at, but it's definitely a favourite inside, so we haven't forgotten about it.

LucasArts have dabbled with just about every game genre. Now you're entering the Sim City-style god game world with Afterlife, what's that all about?

What I like about it is it gets rid of this whole simulation idea, you know once again, is it a sim game? Well you're not really simulating reality. We've all felt that the sim games take themselves a little bit too seriously, we wanted to inject a little bit of fun. It's really hilarious, it's funny, it's got more art, more things to do, constant exploring. The fun stuff in other sim games has always been running Godzilla around the place, that kind of thing. There's a lot more randomness, but it's still a very deep, serious sim game, but in the traditional sim game what's going to keep you going after you've built the perfect environment?

Exactly, everyone loved sim city for the first week, but what do you do after that...

Right, hopefully people will find there's just as much depth there, but you'll be constantly laughing. The other cool aspect with sim games is the imbalance, creating something horrendously imbalanced, you know, creating fifteen football stadiums in sim city then watching the whole thing collapse, it's great to watch. I think half the fun is not creating the perfect world, but the most god-awful, disjointed world and seeing what goes on. You're not God, you just report to him.

FMV is seen with mixed feeling by gamers - hardened gamers generally want as little

IN THE GAME. SPEAKS OUT...

INTERVIEW

as possible, where newcomers and occasional players lap it up, do you feel FMV in the form we have it today has a future?

I think video is a tool, just like actors voices. You're not going to see us do huge video projects. Rebel 2 is the extent, but if you look at Rebel 2 it's a huge improvement over Rebel 1 and those awful two-dimensional animated sequences. What Rebel 2 does is that the characters help set up the next sequences, but there's got to be less than ten minutes of video in the whole product, it just seems like more. Each of those sequences actually go by George's (Lucas) rules. Never leave an effect on-screen for more than 3 seconds, that's his by-word. You've got to provide just enough video so that people feel like it's all there, so the 3D sequences in-between actually feel like it's a movie and you can get inside all of it. But we're not going to do 20-minute sequences, we're a game company, not a movie company.

Tie Fighter is regarded as the definitive space combat sim. Have you seen Wing Commander 4 and what do you think of it and the direction Origin have taken?
Play Tie-Fighter CD, I just think it's a monument to great game design. The Origin guys used to criticize Larry, saying "where's the technology", but the thing is that Larry wanted to get lots of stuff happening at the same time. If you want to have jet game and only have one enemy then of course you can do lots of texture-mapping, but it's not about technology, Larry could have done that all along, but you have to make compromises if you want to have fifteen enemies all dog-fighting on-screen. Star Wars isn't about one-on-one enemies, it's not like Star Trek where you've just got one Klingon ship, you've got dozens of Tie Fighters so you've got to be able to adjust for that so it all looks pretty good.

Will there be more Star Wars space sims for the PC?

Yeah, Larry's working on another one now, it's a huge leap in terms of gaming.

What can we expect?

I can't say anything right now, it's still relatively early on. A lot of people criticised us for it being too easy, but I don't think so, every one we've done, from X-Wing to Tie CD

we've tried to do something both technological in terms of the image, but also in terms of getting a bigger game structure. I think it's just awesome.

We all thought X-Wing was a little too difficult in parts, but Tie just nailed it.

Tell me about it! Larry listened and he learned. Compared to the Dynamix products and the rest of it, I just think Larry's the best in the world.

3D action games are the current rage - at least as far as developers go. Aside from Dark Forces you also had Calia 2095 in the works, but it seems to have disappeared from sight, is it still being developed?

We've scrapped it totally for a number of reasons I can't go into, it was basically announced way too early and it just wasn't working out. Dark Forces 2 I can't talk about either! But 3D is the image idiom for gaming, it has to be. Film is inherently linear and two dimensional, we need 3D as the way to go, but 3D is never going to get the power of having a human being on screen for the right moments. But what's 3D? The flight sims have always been 3D, so now you have 3D characters and 3D environments, games have to progress and everything is going to be 3D it's just going to be the language of gaming and people aren't going to think about it. Graphic adventures have to go that way as well.

Two Dark Forces questions, why no multiplayer and why no save facility mid-level?

The bottom line is that the way the game was originally architected almost denied saving games within each level. Adding a save game facility would have been a huge undertaking, the same with multiplayer support. The production started way before Doom and when we saw Doom it obviously influenced us quite a bit, just like Quake is influencing us now - we talk, everyone's friendly you know. The biggest issue is that you're loading up an entire level into RAM, there's so many components. We wanted to have a realistic environment where different things are happening, the AI was enormous and it became too big an issue to try and save all those different states. We could have done it, but it would have delayed the game

another half a year. Any sequel we do will have save games and multiplayer, as well as other things I don't think people have thought of.

You like real-time strategy games like Command and Conquer, there are far too few games of this genre out and about, any chance of one from LucasArts?

You never know! There's going to be a whole bunch from just about everybody, they'll be just like the Doom clones, they won't be nearly as good.

Exactly how much input does George Lucas contribute?

Well he's not really a gamer but he has a lot of input. Anything we do with Star Wars, he looks at the stories. When we did the filming for Rebel 2 that was the first time he had allowed that, he was pretty involved in making sure he saw what it looked like, he put his friend in charge as the director. He was careful about the way the properties were handled, but I talk to him about once a week and he's very into the business, he knows exactly what's going on. He knows that he's not a gamer, that's my business. He's very involved with the planning of the new Star Wars films, we had long strategy sessions about that and what we're going to do to support the movie and we've effectively got a five year plan, I don't know of any other game company that's got that.

What about the new 3D cards, 3D Blaster and the like?

I'm probably more enthusiastic than I used to be, we're doing certain games for consoles that we'll want to do for the PC. I think we're going to support them more over the next couple of years, not assuming everyone has one, but maybe we'll help drive it forward. I'm not for any one particular card, but what I hope happens to the industry is that they become standard, like sound cards did. Once that happens it's going to explode, but I don't believe in a peripheral you just have to buy, it's only going to reach a certain portion of the audience anyway. We aren't about replicating console graphics, our stuff is always going to remain at around 80% PC and 20% for the new consoles. That's a ratio I like, we're a PC games company.

ONLINE COMBAT, AN AIRWARRIOR

FEATURE

A REVOLUTION IS SWEEPING THROUGH THE WORLD OF PC GAMING, BUT HOW MANY OF US HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO NETWORKS? WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO IT FROM HOME, AT MINIMAL COST.

AIRWARRIOR



Powering-up for another online session.



A lumbering B-25 bomber desperately tries to stay clear of a hostile FW-190.



So what's air-combat really like? You've flown the good simulations, you've read Reach for the Sky by Paul Brickhill, seen 12 o'clock high and Battle of Britain but you still wonder "what was it like to be there?"

Well now you can find out. Thanks to the Internet, Warbirds and Air Warrior you can fly in multi-player combat, in your choice of WWI, WWII or Korean era aircraft. With no missiles and limited radar, these sims are all about full on air-combat, the mk1 human eyeball and gun kills. Lots of gun kills. They may not look as hot as Apache or Mech2 but that's not the point, the point is realistic air combat with REAL people.

You never know when death will drop from the sky when you're flying the 'net. Unlike computers, people are unpredictable and sneaky. Many 'net aces have chalked up kills by waiting around over an enemy airfield and pouncing on an inexperienced flier who neglected to check six (watch their tail). Air-combat on the 'net is a fluid thing, one moment you can be patrolling, looking for an easy kill and the next thing you know you've flown into a screaming dogfight, aircraft from all sides all over the place. You never, ever stop scanning the sky.

In Air Warrior and Warbirds you fly on the Internet, each aircraft you see is piloted by another sim freak who may in reality be on the other side of the world as far as you know. The important thing to remember is these aircraft are piloted by REAL people. If you've only flown against computers prepare to get shot down, there are aces in these skies that are ready to exploit your every mistake. You have to watch your tail and scan the sky just like the real pilots did. Just when you are lining up that bandit for your first kill there will probably someone tracking in on your tail so you have to "check six" often.

Don't be put off by cost either, Air Warrior has a host right here in Australia (Ozhost, doh!), and it's not expensive to fly a few nights a week. You don't need high tech equipment or a full Internet account

either, you can connect to Air Warrior with a fast 386 and a 2400 baud modem with ordinary terminal software, will enable you to download the software and start flying almost immediately.

TWO SIMS TO SATISFY

Air Warrior is the original multi-player air-combat sim from Kesai and has made many friends over the years due to its low technology requirements and highly realistic flight model. Recently Air Warrior has had some stiff competition in the form of the excellent Warbirds. The story goes two programmers who spent many hours flying Air Warrior said "we can do better than this" and went on to design Warbirds.

Warbirds was previously known as Confirmed Kill and was being marketed by Domark. Robert Salinas (one of the people behind Warbirds) told me that; "We had a falling out with Domark about Marketing, and other matters of the game and under the contract exercised our right to end the relationship", simple. Maybe it's just as well because Robert has formed a new company "Interactive Creations Inc." and he and his co-founders Dale Addinct and John McQueen have big plans for Warbirds.

AIR WARRIOR

Air Warrior was the original, it has been around for years and there is software available for Macintosh, Amiga and the PC. The current version is 1.20 SVGA but in Australia you still need the terrain.dat file from 1.18 to fly online. The user interface of Airwar is showing its age and can be a bit clunky at first, but the basic quit, config, multi-user and single-user buttons do the job well enough. These buttons are where you set up the game, choose graphic and sound details and your joystick (CH and Thrustmaster throttles and rudder pedals are supported). You also set up your modem and dial in from here.

Once you have set the game up it is wise to practice offline heaps, until you get used to controlling the plane. Practice low speed

NEW WORLD FOR THE BRAVE RV WARBIRDS

ING. MULTI-PLAYER FLIGHT SIMS ARE NOTHING NEW,
EIGHT PLAYERS? PLEASE... WE WANT HUNDREDS OF PLAYERS,
ST AND WHENEVER WE FEEL LIKE IT. NOW WE CAN...

turns and practice turning at high speed without losing too much energy. Energy is speed, and in air-combat energy can always be used up to gain altitude, altitude is life. If you have an altitude advantage and you see the other guy first you will usually win. The aircraft in Air Warrior are extremely realistic to fly, which makes the combat equally realistic. Taking off its not a matter of simply pulling back the stick and up you go, you have to watch your airspeed or you will stall and stalling at low level will kill you. You have to bank correctly or the plane will slide, you cannot sustain a turn forever because you will lose energy and slide off into a stall. Furthermore, each aircraft is very different in the air with pros and cons when put against other aircraft. Aircraft performance changes depending on your altitude, which you have to bear in mind. Most combat online happens at medium to low altitude. That is under 20,000 feet. It sounds complex and it is, but believe me, the rewards are commensurate.

The graphics on Air Warrior are sharp but simple SVGA, the scenery is flat with the odd mountain to dodge behind and a system of lakes and rivers that are there for navigation reasons instead of aesthetics. You won't be looking at the scenery much, you'll be looking for bandits. Other aircraft (if you've got 8+ megs) look like the aircraft they depict, they even have national markings. The colour of the rudder tells you what country they are flying for; A land (blue), B land (red) or C land (green). Any country can have any make of aircraft flying for it, except in historical scenarios which stick with the actual aircraft used as far as possible. The cockpit art is good and can be modified. The cockpit is a frame of instruments around a viewing window. The actual viewing window takes up about two/thirds of the screen, sounds bad but works well. Your instruments are large and clear and the same no matter what you are flying, they include G-meter, artificial horizon, altimeter, vertical speed, airspeed, fuel, ammo, oil pressure, flaps, rud-

der and landing gear indicators. G-meter shows how many Gs you are pulling. Oil pressure is important, because in negative G situations your oil pressure may drop to the extent that it damages your engine. Each plane has its own out of the cockpit art so when looking out over your wing in a Spit, for example, you see that famous elliptical wing. The rear view is based on the actual rear view too, D model Mustangs have about the best rear view this side of an F-16.

There are 27 aircraft, mostly fighters, from the UK, USA, Japan, Germany and Russia (a shaved Yak), as well as 4 ground vehicles modelled in Air Warrior. All have realistic performance and weapon fit. Most aircraft are from the WWII era which is the era you will most often fly in. Ozhost alternate between a Pacific and European theatre of operations. Certain aircraft are excluded from the different theatre of ops, mainly the Japanese types from the European theatre and the German types from the Pacific theatre. The WWI and Korean era aircraft are usually restricted to special scenarios.

In combat you are awarded for a kill when the other plane explodes. If your quarry crashes trying to escape, you don't get awarded for the kill, you have to work for it. You cannot ram other aircraft, and the actual "hit bubble" that you are aiming for is a bit bigger than the aircraft, which is typical for all combat sims.

Air Warrior has many great features. The instruments are clear and easy to read, there is a lead computing gunsight, which means to hit another aircraft you just get your sight on it and wham, as opposed to a boresight gunsight where you have to mentally compute deflection etc. The flight model is very good, you really have to respect the aircraft. Also when you bail out in Air Warrior you can free fall before pulling your 'chute, thereby avoiding getting hit by a plane on the way down! Not really important in normal play, but in scenarios you are often only given one life, so bailing out is serious business.



100% concentration 100% of the time, or else.

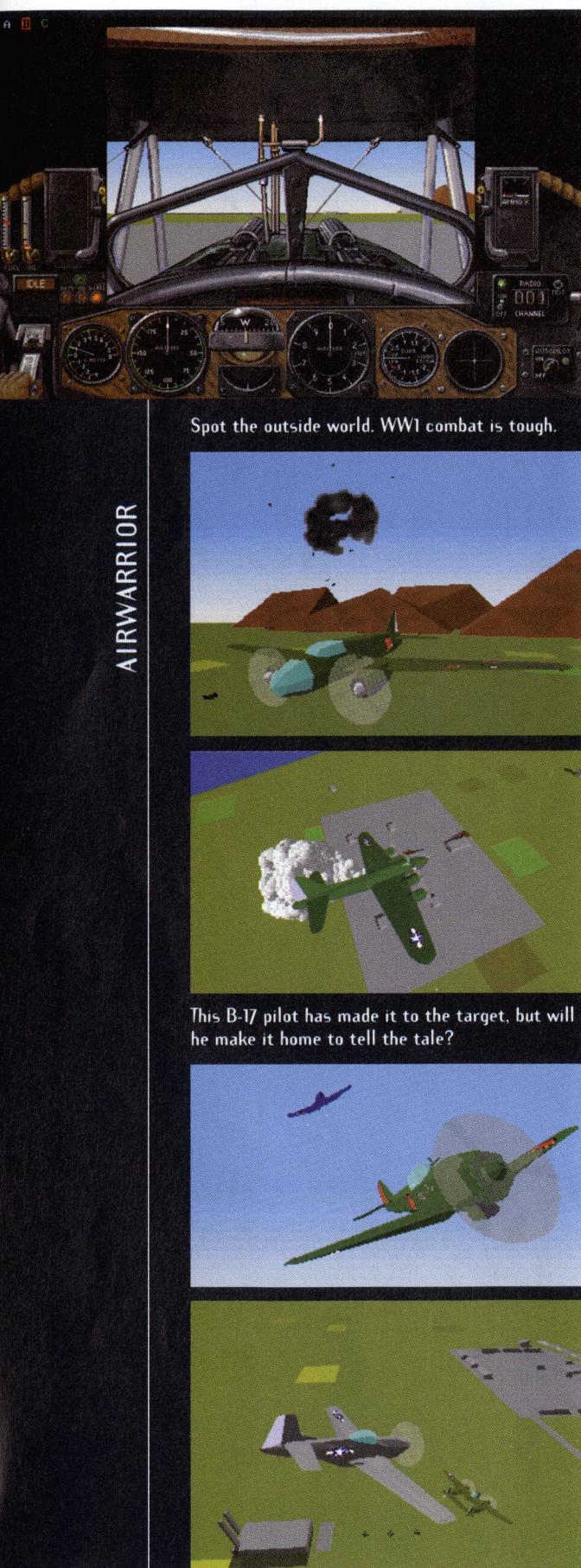


A Zero pilot enjoys the view moments before twin Corsairs make it "game over".



WARBIRDS

FEATURE



AIRWARRIOR

WARBIRDS

There are a few subtle, and not so subtle differences that make Warbirds the better overall experience. First it looks better. In Warbirds, apart from a small radio text window you have a full screen view, with the cockpit of whatever plane you are flying being fully functional, as opposed to Air Warrior's generic cockpit frame surrounding the individual plane art. As a result different Warbird's aircraft have unique cockpits, some which work well and some which can annoy. Your view is full screen. The scenery in Warbirds looks very nice, still flat with mountains here and there but for some reason it works better than Air Warrior. The air-bases also look better, they actually look like air-bases and not a runway with a grey block next to it. One night while playing Warbirds I noticed the virtual sky getting darker. It was the night coming and we kept fighting all through the dusk, planes were colliding all over the place until it was too dangerous to fly. Within half an hour it was day again. It was only pitch black for a minute but the dusk and dawn segments were fantastic and looked great as well as adding a tangible sense of realism to it all.

The second difference is the actual mechanics behind air-combat. In Warbirds you can ram the aircraft you are trying to shoot down and if you do the other guy is awarded your kill. If the other pilot crashes while trying to escape you, you are awarded the kill. This makes a big difference to game play, in Air Warrior it is very frustrating when your opponent crashes just as you think you are about to get a kill, and you don't get credited. In Warbirds forcing a guy down is almost as good as killing him as far as your score goes, not quite as sensible but much more fun. In Warbirds there is no "hit bubble" around the plane. You have to hit the actual plane and you damage the part of the plane you actually hit. Fantastic. As you are getting shot, the sim reports damage and you feel the plane getting harder to fly.

At the moment there are only nine aircraft modelled in Warbirds. All the ones you would expect; the American F4U Corsair, P39D Aircobra, P51D Mustang, P38 Lightning and B-17 Flying Fortress, The German Messerschmidt Bf 109G, Focke Wulf 190A-4, The UK's Spitfire Mk IX, and Japanese Mitsubishi A6M5 (Zeke). The B-17 has temporarily been removed because people were using them as a gunship, flying into dogfights and wasting fighters left right and centre.

Robert Salinas tells me that they will soon add the SBD Dauntless carrier dive bomber, F6F Hellcat carrier fighter and the Japanese Aichi D3A (Val) navy dive bomber. This will allow them to start staging Pacific theatre scenarios. They will also be adding variants of fighters already present, the Spitfire Mk V, Bf 109F and Fw 190A-8. The host can support 1000 different aircraft and Salinas tells me they will be adding 12 new types and 6 variants a year.

The most likable things about Warbirds are the looks, the selective damage, the easy to use map (where red arrows point from you towards enemies) and of course the full screen forward view.

Future modifications to the already superior Warbirds code include carrier task groups that actually follow a course around the game world (the code for this is done already), ground vehicles, and rolling textured landscape, these are on the way. Even further down the line is a rumour that Warbirds may eventually have an arena where the success and failures of the air combat will be reflected by movements of the front line on the ground. There could be a logistics network connecting factories, airfield etc. Supplies would travel this network by rail and there would be more ground targets to go after. Whichever direction it takes, Warbirds looks here to stay and it's masters give a refreshing damn about it.

The radio is an important piece of kit in both sims. In combat you may need to call for help if you are out numbered, or just out looking for a fight. It's easy to call up on the radio and ask where the action is. In scenarios you may be given directions by a ground controller and be told what to do by umpires. In both sims the "radio" operates in a similar fashion, you can type on a common band, which everyone will see. You also have a band which only your countrymen will see, and in Warbirds you can chose and band which only your wingman will see. The host system reports game-world events through the radio too, so in Air Warrior you will see the odd "a kill has been recorded" and in Warbirds you will see who died and how.

Actual air combat in both sims is very similar, if you can call totally unpredictable similar. The combat is divided into two general types. Boom and Zoom or Stall Fights. Boom and Zooming is recommended for new pilots, you climb to a very high altitude and start looking for a dogfight. Most dogfights

end up at low altitudes (as they did in WWII), so it's safest to find a dogfight and circle off to one side of it and at a much higher altitude. Wait 'till a straggler breaks out of the fight then go diving down, flat out and make a high speed gun run on the dude. Hopefully you'll nuke him, then pull up without losing much airspeed and end up around your starting altitude. You're the hawk and they are the chickens. No one can get a shot at you as you pass through the dogfight at about twice the speed of everyone else. Hence the name Boom and Zoom, they go boom you go zoom. The stall fight is the classic low speed turning fight. Most fights start off as boom and zoom and degenerate into a stall fight.

GETTING STARTED

In Air Warrior the Supermarine Spitfire Mk IX is the aircraft to start in and is popular for new players. For this reason it is often called the "dweebfire". The reason the Spitfire is a good choice to start in is it is fairly easy to fly, performs well, and holds its speed. It can climb faster than any other except the Bf 109 which means you can always climb out of a fight if you need to.

In the Pacific theatre in Air Warrior your best choice is the Nakajima Ki-84 Hayate (Gale), this was one of the best Japanese fighters of the war and had the allied code-name of Frank. It can out turn all aircraft with the exception of the Zero, which makes it good in stall fights. It also has good firepower with 2 x 20mm cannon and 2 x 12.7mm machine guns. The wings tend to fall off in high speed dives though, which is not an entirely good thing.

My personal favourite fighters in Warbirds are the Zero for stall fights because it outturns everything and the Mustang for boom and zooming because it's fast, powerful and has outstanding visibility.

On both Air Warrior and Warbirds from time to time they have scenarios. A scenario is the replaying of a historic event, which may be best explained by giving an example of an up and coming Warbirds scenario.

In this scenario, set in Korea, the B landers (dumb name, just the way it is) playing the North Korean air force and flying MiG-15s have to defend their air base against ground attack fighters of the United States (A landers). The American ground attack aircraft (mud movers) will be Corsair F4Us, which were still flying during the Korean conflict. The Americans will have a combat

air patrol made up of F86 Sabre jets who will try to stop the MiGs.

In order for North Korea to win, they just have to defend their base. In order for the Yanks to win, they have to hit the Korean air base with 8 bombs on a single mission. The twist is, the Yank side will be piloted by the more experienced Air Warrior pilots, while the Koreans will be the less experienced people, but have more aircraft up. If the North Korean side is feeling especially adventurous they can try to hit the American air base with their Yak 9s. This actually portrays the state of affairs during the Korean conflict, the Yank air force was out numbered but the Korean pilot training was not as good. In this scenario bailing out or ditching your aircraft will put you in the sin bin for 5 minutes, after which you can continue to fight.

Overall, I like the number of aircraft Air Warrior has to offer and I also like its flight model the best, for example in the MiG-15 once you pass a certain airspeed you can get into an uncontrollable dive. It's also better for historical scenarios.

On the other hand Warbirds is easier to set up, looks much nicer and runs a bit faster - even with its superior graphics (the day to night transition is fantastic!). Warbirds also has the more realistic damage and point scoring. Once the aircraft carriers arrive it will be insane, anyone want to replay the battle of the Coral Sea?

I would suggest you try Air Warrior on Ozhost first, then get onto the internet and experience the Warbirds way of doing things. The two are very hard to chose between any many people I know fly on both sims. It's like trying to choose between Italian and Chinese food, they both have noodles, and they both taste great, but they're different. P.T.

For info on Air Warrior, call Metro Games on 03 93292999, or connect to their BBS on 03 93282968. Metro offer dial-up facilities for all capital cities in Australia and some regional centers. Even if you're calling from Darwin, it's still the cost of a local call to get on. Online time is charged at the rate of \$5.00 per hour.

Air Warrior info on the web can be found at: <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~dond/awhome.htm> or on the U.S. Site: <http://cactus.org:80/airwarrior/>

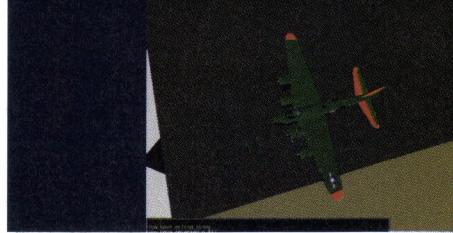
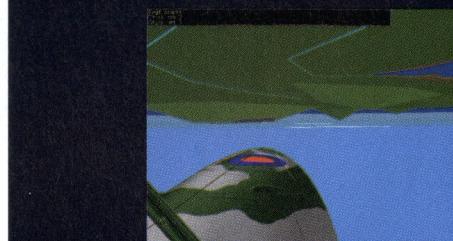
You can get the Warbirds experience underway by first visiting this site: <http://www.cris.com/~gunjam/> or Peter Tosi's homepage for links: <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~cdog/>



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When it all comes together. Defend those bombers or it's all for nothing!



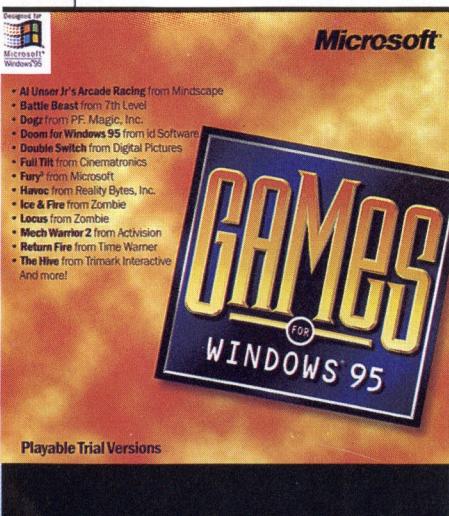
Competitions

Win a WIN 95 Games CD

Windows 95 is looking good as a game platform of the future. Why? DirectX, that's why. This technology enables games to communicate directly (hence the name) with your PC's hardware, offering DOS-like graphics speed. To herald this new era, Microsoft are giving away 20 copies of their Games for Windows 95 CD. This sampler contains playable demos of 39 hot games, like Fury3 and Doom for Win 95.

To enter, write the name of Microsoft's breakthrough graphics technology on the back of an envelope and send it to:

PC PowerPlay
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PO BOX 634
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Win Special Descent 2 Packs

You've read the Descent 2 review in this issue, you've played the original game and now you simply have to have a copy of the incredible sequel. Thanks to PC PowerPlay and the kind folks at Sega Ozisoft you can - the cheap and easy way.

- First prize winner gets: The Descent 2 Anniversary Edition game, a limited edition Descent 2 flight jacket and cap, the Descent 2 vertigo kit and a Descent 2 T-shirt.
- Five second prize winners get: A copy of Descent 2 and the T-shirt.
- And fifty runners-up will win a copy each of the Descent 2 sampler disk.

Sounds good? Is good. Gets better. To win, you must invent a name for the Guide-bot in Descent 2. Similar Descent 2 competitions are being held worldwide, with the winning name to be used in future Descent games. The winner in this competition will be decided by Interplay, and will go on the shortlist with other winning entries from around the world for the final decision.

Write your Guide-bot name on the back of an envelope and send it to:

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Put Up Your Dukes

After looking at the screenshots of Duke Nukem 3D in this issue, you've hopefully arrived at the conclusion that it's an incredible game, and that you simply have to get a copy. Thanks to Mannacom we're giving away five copies of the full game. To have a hope, write the name of the game that Duke Nukem 3D is the sequel to on the back of an envelope, and send it to:

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GRAND

LONG AWAITED, MUCH ANTICIPATED AND FINALLY HERE.
EVER SINCE WE FIRST RACED

FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	NOW
CATEGORY	F1 SIM
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	MICROPROSE
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G

For three years the serious end of the racing sim genre was ruled exclusively by Formula One Grand Prix. The crown was bestowed not because Grand Prix was all there was, there were others, but none of them captured the essence of F1 as convincingly, or simply, were as much fun. Clean graphics and screaming engine effects set the scene, in 1991 the texture mapped track was quite special, while the cars were built from so many polygons you'd need both hands to count them. Grand Prix had immense replay value, if you could be bothered typing in the new seasons' changes the fantasy remained relevant, while the game's challenging yet approachable handling model was good for a couple of year's worth of monthly thrashes. You couldn't do much about new and altered circuits, track packs were never released, but we were content with the knowledge that Grand Prix 2 was coming, sometime.

Then, just when MicroProse started using words like "imminent" in GP2 conversation, Indycar Racing was released. It awoke everybody - including Microprose, to the fact that Grand Prix wasn't that fantastic. To anyone driving Indycar for the first time it was apparent that this was a proper sim. Grand Prix's tolerable idiosyncrasies were suddenly seen as simplistic arcade solutions. Ironically, Indycar's accurate dynamics put many people off, actually stringing a couple of laps together at speed and without coming off was rare without considerable practise. That of course, is only the case with twisty circuits such as Laguna Seca, the banked ovals comprising most Indycar races were the other problem. These contests of perfect car setup and boredom tolerance appealed to some, but many retreated to the familiar womb of Grand Prix in anticipation of the by then fabled GP2.

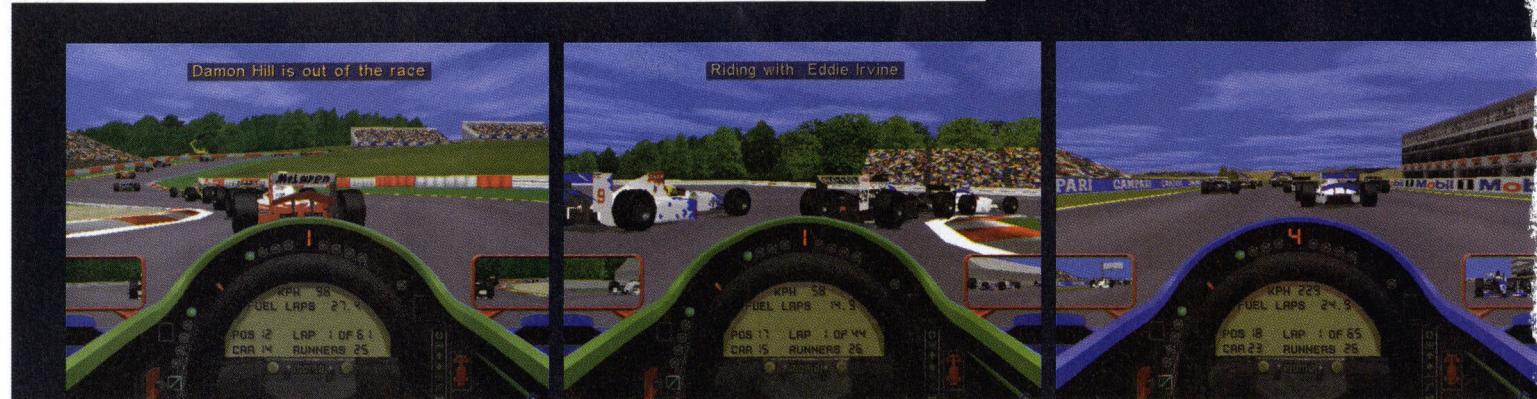
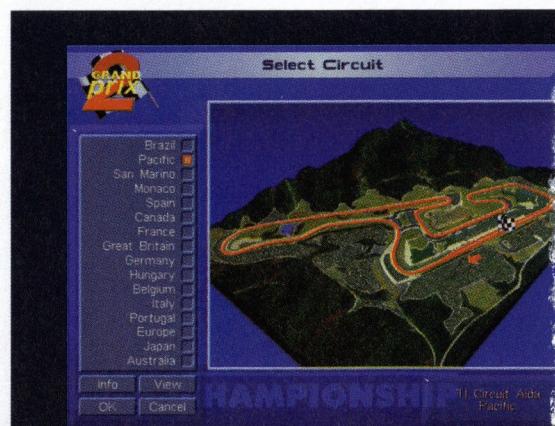
The years passed. In the second half of 1995 screenshots of a complete looking game confirmed that it at least looked incredible. Indycar Racing 2 was released. Christmas passed and MicroProse's "100% definite" release date slipped by - the weekend of the Melbourne GP in March.

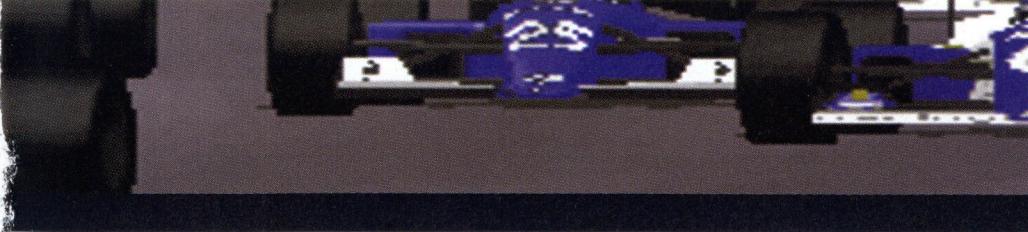
Now it's real. Until the house of Crammond and MicroProse decide to do another one, this is their laurel. Many impres-

sive driving sims are out and more are impending, but the unique flavour that is Formula 1 is notably short-served by quality sims. Hopefully this will change, but it's no great tragedy if it doesn't, for GP2 is as good as you could want it to be.

TWENTY EIGHT SUSPENSION VARIABLES.

Undoubtedly motivated by the Indycar shock, Microprose have gone overboard (overtime?) to produce what is for now, the complete racing game. Besides the impressive dynamics, GP2 has all the fluff that's guaranteed to please the fussiest F1 fan. Car setup options now range to seemingly ridiculous extremes, there seven variables for suspension on each wheel, for example, twenty eight in total for





REVIEW

PRIX 2

WE'VE BEEN NEEDING A QUALITY F1 SIM
THE FLAWED BUT FUN ORIGINAL. GENTLEMEN...

the entire car, with the option to run either symmetrical or assymetrical setups. Sliding scales let you adjust: packers, damper fast bump, fast rebound, slow bump, slow rebound, spring and ride height. Then you've got front and rear roll bar adjustments. Sort all that out and you're done with suspension and can move on to gear ratios, wing angles and brake balance.

The complete GP2 experience only comes when you've created a perfect setup for each track - including a separate qualifying modifications. One could, however, extract years of joy from GP2 by only messing with wing angles, brake balance and gear ratios. It's even feasible that a large proportion of players won't go beyond the default setup, using

this highly compromised setting for all 16 races. Microprose have obviously taken care not to alienate occasional players, while the focus is obviously the satisfaction of gamers with the highest expectations, it's still an approachable thrill for lesser folks. If they last the first week, that is.

Within a week you'll know whether GP2 will stay on your hard drive or not. The dynamics which MicroProse took so long to perfect are so accurate (we little people presume), that the numerous spin-offs a new player is likely to experience can be severely de-motivating. Masters of the original Grand Prix who approach the sequel with too much confidence will be in for a learning experience, it's totally different. Once you get a grip

on the handling the game really kicks in. It's then that altering setups begins to make sense, that winning on tougher levels becomes conceivable and then, that the F1 fantasy you bought the game for takes shape.

LITTLE ROOM FOR ERROR.

Watching F1 cars come off in seemingly routine situations is a regular event out there in reality, with GP2 you'll make the same mistakes, but will understand why and hopefully have a bit more respect for F1 drivers. Heavy-footed brake usage is generally the first Big Problem new GP2 players encounter. Without feeling negative G's, it's tough to get a feel for exactly what the car is doing and these cars can be hauled up surprisingly quickly, the ►



REVIEW

► gap between full stop and locked-up less than marginal. They don't steer very well while they're sliding, so the ticket is to ease up at the right moment and drive it through corners. Letting the car coast through is no good at all, it'll pull in better with a delicate squeeze on the pedal. Get either of those basics slightly wrong on any of the corners, throughout the entire race, and you're off. There is very little room for error in GP2, which, if that's what it's like for real, then is how it ought to be with the game.

GP2 asks 100% concentration 100% of the time. The cars are more nimble than their predecessors and driving feels more like actually being in control of a car (Indycar's strength) than a computer approximation (the original Grand Prix's weakness). Plan on a week to get competitive on each track and hone a reasonable setup (or just grab setup files off the internet from proud mechanics).

New reality-rooted inconveniences are ripple strips and sand traps. Indycar circuits

aren't big on ripple strips and that made for messy and annoying racing. GP2 has them and it's a good thing too, considering the basic difficulty of driving fast consistently. Their presence introduces new factors, the cars handle appropriately in this true 3D environment, with the least you can expect being a loss of traction and speed on the strips, the worst launching into a full rotation in all dimensions - which the game engine is capable of, often. Sand traps however, aren't fun in any way. They're a bumpy, haphazard and time consuming affair to drive out of, but that's reality for you.

The computer cars drive under the influence of AI that's just about right. Instead of blindly running their own race, as with the original, they behave as if driven by people who both value their lives and want to win. Passing manoeuvres can now be conducted with relative confidence, if your line is good and you're reasonably through, then they won't protest with a rude bump. Frontrunners

however, will drive skilfully and defend their positions with gusto. All have slightly different driving styles, which, while only noticeable during overtaking, make for unpredictable and exciting racing. The driver attributes are loosely based on the styles of the drivers modelled in the game (which are all real, no fake names). Hopefully no noses will be put too far out of joint, Damon Hill's won't at least, he's smooth, safe and predictable - and the default driver coincidentally, in this English game. Fans, incidentally, can check out Damon's home page on the net from www.micropose.com, by the way.

Damon from the outside, like all the drivers, looks fantastic. With all the graphic options turned on in SVGA the F1 fantasy is complete. From the right angle you can see the cockpit detail of opponent's cars, or instead spend the bulk of your time marvelling at the glistening, touchable plastic sheen of the cars themselves. The tracks, being 16 of them around the world - perfectly recreated in





3D too, are a highly varied mix of lush forest, inner city architecture, desert - the works. Wave to your virtual mates in familiar Adelaide buildings or wait until the 1996 track pack and cry "trees a crowd" as you hurtle through the Melbourne park.

FORMULA 1 COMPUTER.

Unfortunately, getting a smooth frame rate with the best graphics requires a Formula 1 computer. Standard VGA mode is there as refuge for the ill-equipped, it's a very good VGA too, plentiful detail and quite believable, but one glimpse of the high-res SVGA mode is enough to start upgrade thoughts. In high-res on a Pentium 90 textured trackside objects and not much else yields an just acceptable frame rate of around 19 fps, while for the same frame rate a P133 allowed everything except sky and track texture. Either of these two options turned on basically halve the frame rate, which is grossly disproportionate to the effect of other graphics options, a

shame really since they add most to the realism. Surface markings are still present on the track with detail off, so it all looks solid and gives a reasonable sensation of speed. But go without the extravagantly rich sky detail and the remaining slab of primary blue is disappointingly reminiscent of games long gone, and is a glaring inconsistency in the presence of such rich detail everywhere else. A subtle smattering of white blobs as a low-end option would have been good. Still, there are enough selectable graphics options to customise the game to taste, within the constraints of your CPU.

It's a bit disappointing to find the replay facility hasn't really changed. Indycar managed to store most of a long race, GP2 gives but a few corners. On the other hand, it is more useful to quickly pause and watch a quick replay when you do something amazing, in contrast to Indy's too smart VCR-type system. The viewpoints are the same too, whether you're in replay mode or on the track, it's in-car, behind or in front and the TV camera view, which looks quite beautiful in everything-on mode SVGA. It's slightly worrying that these replay similarities, as well as many other functional elements, are identical to those in Grand Prix. Hopefully MicroProse just settled on these approaches as the best, and didn't simply build this game around ancient code.

Regardless though, racing is the important bit and MicroProse got it pretty right. Whether selectively racing favourite circuits or playing for real and doing the championship, immense gaming gratification is here to be had. Going through an entire season on full race distance at maximum difficulty is the ultimate test, it should be tried at least once, at least at a difficulty to match your

skill, as the luxury of knowing you're on the pace means finishing out of the points in a race or two doesn't mean you're out of contention. Just like in real life.

GP2 does make compromises. As sophisticated as its' driving model is, mastering it still happens quicker than with Indycar - which may still be regarded as possessing superior dynamics. This will only displease retired racing drivers though, the game has been geared for demanding gamers and if the upper 1% of perfectionists can still find fault, then their loss, the rest of us love it.

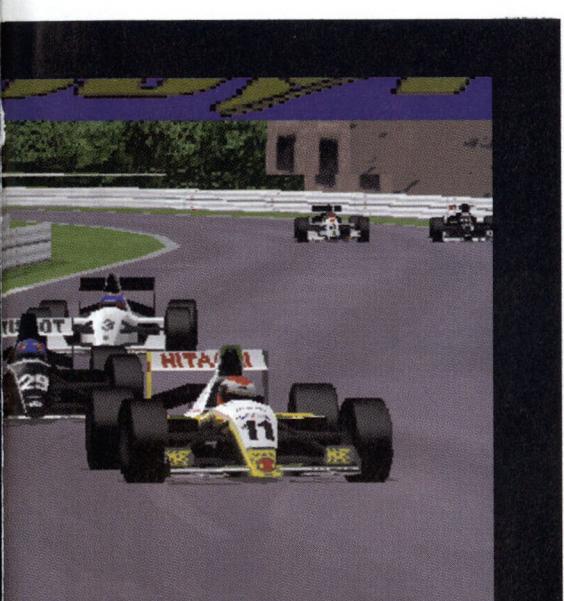
Next for MicroProse is a track pack that modifies the game to 1996 conditions. It will be interesting to see if they incorporate all the changes that have occurred since 1994, besides the new and altered circuits, will the add-on include the new cars both dynamically and graphically? MicroProse have proved with GP2 that their standards as still as high as ours, so presumably it's likely. For now though, we've got the GP2 we've been so anxious for, it's very hard, immensely satisfying and tremendous fun. Everything a great game has to be, in fact.

B.M.

GRAPHICS	9
AUDIO	8
GAMEPLAY	8
REPLAY	9
OVERALL	9

OUR PERHAPS UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS, CULTIVATED BY THE DELAY OF YEARS, HAVE BEEN SOUNDLY MET. NOW ALL YOU'RE LIKELY TO WANT IS INSTANT SKILL AND A NINJA COMPUTER.

NEED: 486DX2/66, 8 MB RAM (VGA), 16 MB RAM (SVGA). WANT: PENTIUM 166+, 24 MB RAM, GOOD WHEEL AND PEDAL CONTROLS.



DESCENT

IT'S A MONTH OF GREAT SEQUELS, WITH DESCENT FEROIOUS GAMEPLAY PLUS BEAUTIFUL GRAPHICS



FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	NOW
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER	INTERPLAY
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G8

In the first Descent, you played a freelance gun-for-hire, hauled in and contracted to the Post-Terran Mining Corporation (PTMC). Apparently, some dastardly alien race had infiltrated some 30 vital mining stations belonging to the PTMC and turned all the mines' worker robots against their owners. Even more disturbing was that they had constructed a form of artificial intelligence, thus creating not only tenacious opponents, but ones that could adapt

to their surroundings and needs. The PTMC wanted you to enter each mine, on various moons from Earth to Pluto, clean them out, rescue any hostages still alive, destroy the life-source reactors, and return in time for sausage and kippers for breakfast. Though they were not overly worried about the last bit.

Descent 2 comes in where the proficient Descent player finished, having accomplished the mission and headed back to PTMC headquarters. An understated introductory sequence shows you navigating an impressive asteroid belt and, after gaining security clearance, docking with the PTMC mothership. You're on a bit of a high, feeling pretty pleased with yourself and getting ready to start counting your pay. However, a nagging doubt still lingers in the back of your mind -

"Have I simply been used? Did something go wrong? How do I know I can trust the PTMC? And why have Interplay decided to release this sequel? Do they know something I don't?". Then it hits. Flashing onto your computer monitor is the self-satisfied head of your employer. He says you're still under contract (some minor detail stipulating that the PTMC have final veto over the length and termination of your employment), they still have work for you to do, and there's nothing you can do about it.

Unconfirmed reports of abnormal activity in a far-flung sector under PTMC's control need investigation and taking into account the success of your previous job, you are obviously the man for this one, too. Besides, as the PTMC man unconvincingly attempts to assure



2

2 BEING AMONGST THE MOST EAGERLY AWAITED. MAKE FOR A GREAT GAMING EXPERIENCE...



you, this is just a straightforward reconnaissance mission - fly in, take a look around, then report back, easy, no worries, piece of cake... until things start shooting at you.

SPECTACULAR AND VITAL MANOEUVRES

Descent 2 is a truly 3D game that allows total freedom of movement. Pressing left or right rotates your ship around the y-axis, while up or down rotates around the x-axis. Then using A and Z (to move in, respectively, forward and reverse) you can move in absolutely any direction you wish. Barrel rolls are able to be performed at the press of a key, so too strafing, whether it be up, down, left or right. Combining any of the above will result in some spectacular, and often essential (being capable of strafing whilst turning and shoot-

ing is vital), manoeuvres. Of course, none of these fancy acrobatics would count for anything if the level design wasn't equally unique and adventurous. Thankfully, after a slow start, it is.

Some of you would no doubt have seen the three level Descent 2 demo that was doing the rounds on the Internet earlier in the year. Did you feel a little disappointed? Come on, if I'm willing to admit it, then you should too - it WAS disappointing. Sure, they were some impressive cosmetic enhancements and new features, but the level design was quite a let-down. Level One was dull, drab and completely uninspired, while the next two seemed intent on throwing in everything - grey metallic sections, long thin twisty rooms, large expansive rooms, lava pools, ice walls,

dark rooms, the kitchen sink, its mouldy plug and contaminated dishcloth - showing off all its wares at once, in the hope that the player must like at least one of them. Sadly, the result was a mess, the variety in graphical styles only managed to detract from the overall atmosphere of each level. However, with the complete game now in my hands I can say that these early levels are just an aberration (if, still, a strange and annoying one).

YOUR EYES WIDEN SIGNIFICANTLY

After the slow beginning things really do open up immensely. The levels are split into groups of three or four mines located in the same sector of space. Each of these groups is thematically consistent, so you face similar graphical styles, robots, secret bits, tricks, and so forth. Beyond the first few you'll discover the water worlds. You start out in a fairly nondescript little room. Open the door though, and you'll find yourself at the top of an enormous pit with running water way down at the bottom. I'm not sure how I can properly explain the dimensions of this room - I guess it takes about five seconds to fly to the opposite wall and a bit longer to reach the pool down below - but I can guarantee that your eyes will widen significantly the first time you see it. Then you'll fly through



◀ the gap on the side wall and find yourself at the top of another room of equally enormous proportions there too. After you've destroyed all the robots here (I'll just gloss over that, I'm still concentrating on the architecture) you will undoubtedly want to know where all that water is coming from. Glide downwards to the water's surface and you will notice it appearing from a cave at one end and running into another cave at the other end. Exploring in either direction will mean encountering narrow twisting tunnels, small canals cut through the floor of larger rooms, waterfalls and complete darkness. The last two together make for a particularly scary combination. Picture it, you've just finished off a nasty missile-bearing robot, but in doing so you've shot out the only lights along the cavern. Firing off a couple of flares will briefly light the way ahead, indicating a towering waterfall. Soon the flares fade and all that registers on your senses is the overwhelming roar of the rushing water. One of D2's new features is the inclusion of a headlight power-up, which will come to your aid in situations like this. It does, however, drain your energy reserve quickly, so use it sparingly. Often the game looks better without it anyway - spooky shadows and frightening dark corners, you know.

MOST BREATHTAKING SCENES EVER

Later on there are the lava worlds. One of several especially memorable incidents from these occurs when you duck through a doorway and find yourself in a fragile cage above a powerful lava flow. The cage acts as a kind of bridge across the deadly lava, but venturing from the safety of the doorway will leave you exposed to the cannon and missile fire of the half dozen or so robots on either side. Attempting to blast them from within the



cage is futile, so you're best bet is to use the new afterburner function to dart across then try to find another route into those rooms. Eventually you will, but not before steering through some of the most breath-taking scenes you've ever seen in a game. Think swooping between incredibly big, oddly structured rooms with deep red, glowing walls and blindingly bright orange lava floors and flows, packed with mechanical spiders billowing fireballs and hooded orange reatures bombarding you with ricocheting Phoenix cannon death.

Better still, some of the lava flows look a bit strange, as if you can almost see through them. Crash into these and you'll appear on the other side, opening up more caves, robots, and usually the odd secret room as well. The same thing happens in the water levels. Many of the waterfalls can be flown through, though some cheat a bit by looking exactly like normal impenetrable waterfalls. Occasionally you'll find yourself being shot at by something you can't see, if so then the

offending robot is probably hiding behind that not-so-solid wall behind you. Or else it's invisible. Eek!

Other new features are more interesting puzzles and secret rooms. You'll see plenty of computer panels on the walls of the more normal sections of a level. These generally unlock a door, open up a new area, or remove a forcefield from nearby. One way to tell what they have done is to check the arrows on the panel. These tell you in which direction the door (or whatever) was that you just opened. Secret doors are also much harder to spot, some look no different to a normal wall and they are usually only found by accident.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE MAP

Descent 2 boasts plenty of new weapons, of course. Your normal bog-standard laser can now be increased up to Level Six; the Vulcan cannon can now be upgraded to the splendidly effective Gauss cannon, both using the same ammo; the Helix cannon is similar to the Spreadfire cannon except that it fires five



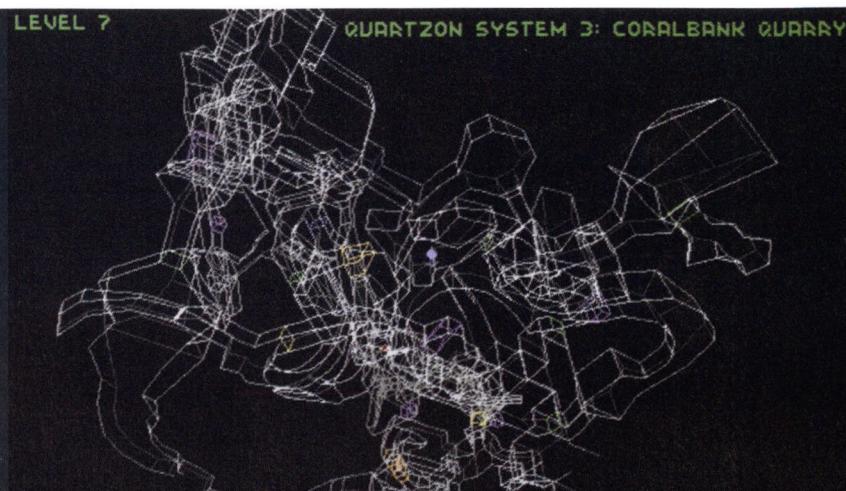
GUIDE BOT



TRANSPORT BOT



SMELTER BOT



"THE DESCENT 2 MAP IS STILL VIRTUALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE" - PRETTY THOUGH

shots simultaneously instead of three; the Phoenix cannon blasts fireballs that bounce off walls (and initially, you will often accidentally shoot yourself with this - so don't use it to open doors, okay); and the Omega cannon which I didn't find (sob). Plus! There are several new secondary weapons too - the best being the Guided missile (when fired, the screen in your cockpit shows the view from the missile and you use the normal ship controls to steer it, although it moves swiftly and takes some getting used to) and the Smart mine (which you drop then shoot from a distance, sending many smaller mines careening into any nearby enemy robots - perfect for the cowards among us, like me).

A couple of other new things will have you sighing with blessed relief and tearing your hair out in inexhaustible irritation, respectively. The Guidebot is heaven-sent. You can find him fairly close to the start of each level, and once you do he'll lead you to the various keys, the main doors, energy centres, hostages, and finally the reactor. Essentially

he's there because the Descent 2 map is still virtually incomprehensible (just look at the grab on these pages for proof). On the other hand, the Thiefbot will really test your patience. He pops up on (I think) every level and his one aim is to steal your power-ups by ramming your ship and scarpering away. Keep your rear-view screen on at all times, because he always tries to sneak up behind you. Luckily, despite his high speed and agility making him tough to track down, once you've got him in your sight (particularly with the rapid-firing Gauss cannon) he's not too much trouble.

Basically, Descent 2 isn't a huge advance over Descent, but it feels like a deeper, better constructed, more professional and well thought-out game. The higher resolution graphics look amazing, but are painfully slow even on a Pentium 100. I spent most of my time using the basic 320x200 mode with the cockpit turned off (and most of these grabs are from that mode), yet had no complaints. And you won't either. The optional CD sound-

track by industrial nose-bleeders Skinny Puppy will really get your adrenalin going. Or give you a splitting headache. I preferred it turned off, letting the excellent ambient sounds and ferocious FX take a deserved pride of place.

Descent 2 is a magnificent game. If you haven't played Descent before, get this. If you already have the original, there's no reason not to own both.

D.W.

GRAPHICS	9
AUDIO	8
GAMEPLAY	9
REPLAY	9
OVERALL	9

THE ORIGINAL DESCENT WAS FIRST WITH A TRUE 3D WORLD, THE SEQUEL ADDS SVGA, COOLER WEAPONS AND THE MOST DEVIOUS ENEMIES THIS SIDE OF REALITY.

NEED: 486DX/50, 8MB RAM, 2 SPEED CD WANT: PENTIUM 75, CH OR THRUSTMASTER JOYSTICK



SID MEIER'S C

YOU WON'T FIND MANY GAMERS WHO DON'T INCLUDE
NOW THE CLASSIC HAS A MIGHTY SEQUEL, SO



FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	APRIL
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	MICROPROSE
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G

In the beginning there was Civilisation. It appeared in the dark ages of PC gaming - 1988 to be precise. Back then strategy gamers had to be content with comparatively simple games like Command HQ and Railroad Tycoon. Civilisation was a revelation, it simultaneously heralded a new era for what was possible in a computer game, spawned countless imitations and was singularly responsible for an entire generation of socially deprived game addicts. Thinking "just one more turn" at 3am on a weekday morning wasn't uncom-

mon, as were virtually sleepless marathon weekend sessions in which an entire game could be played in one sitting if you were super-efficient with your bodily functions.

INSTANT MEGA-HIT

Civilisation hit the big time because it successfully combined normally un-related game styles, as well as pioneering a few new ones and establishing a new genre that now virtually rules the strategy game world. Overall it's an empire-building strategy game, but seamlessly inter-woven are resource management, scientific advancement, city building and enhancement, diplomacy, trade and finance, transport empire building and straight tactical combat. Phew! The scope was momentous, no game previously had unified so many grand concepts - indeed, no game at the time really focused on more than one main element. Thanks to the brilliance and hard work

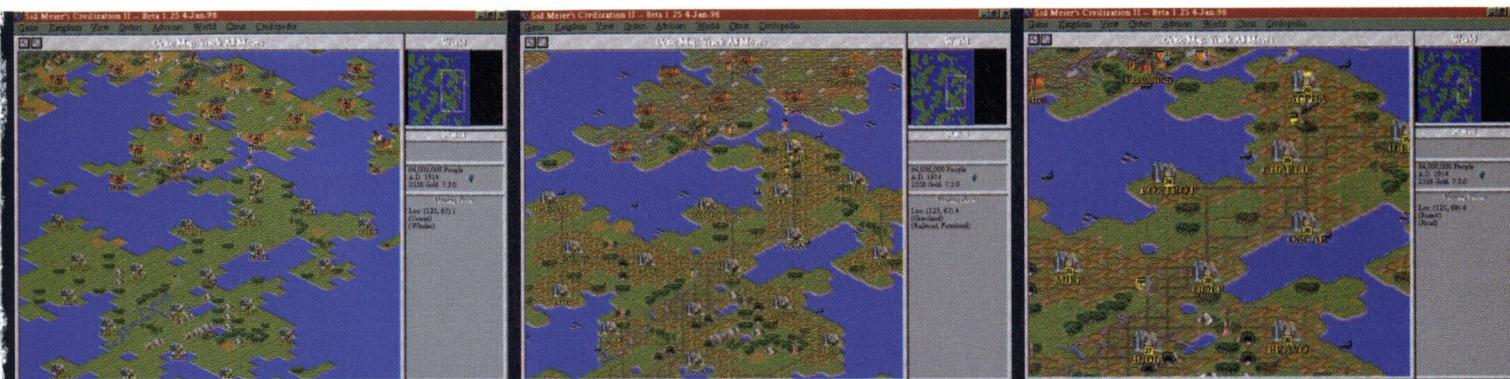
of Sid Meier and his team at MicroProse, Civilisation hit the streets as a balanced and eminently playable game, instead of the top-heavy and convoluted mess it could have been. It instantly became a mega hit. Gamers normally disposed to simpler games with more moving parts were unexpectedly hooked, schools used it as an educational tool and despite its age, the original Civilisation is still being played today.

As perfect as it is, Civilisation was one game that desperately needed a multiplayer option. So vocal were the pleas to MicroProse for such a version that CivNet was developed. It supports every conceivable method of multiplaying, including by internet, runs in high resolution under Win95 and is probably most famous for arriving six years too late. Still, we wanted it, we asked for it and they gave it to us. With CivNet MicroProse didn't mess with the gameplay, it's the same game and that's a



CIVILISATION 2

CIVILISATION IN THEIR ALL TIME FAVOURITES.
PREPARE FOR MORE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS...



good thing. Strategy gamers though are generally pedantic and demanding perfectionists, so MicroProse have taken the obvious Next Big Step and developed Civilisation 2.

It's huge, fabulous and near-perfect, but then again it's Civilisation 2 and we wouldn't expect anything less. Sid Meier and MicroProse are a sensible lot, they have managed to come up with a game that's faithful to the essence of the original, but addresses both the countless bug reports we the gamers were kind enough to whinge about, as well as throwing in a heap of new features that could only have occurred to the likes of a gaming genius such as Mr Meier.

MAJOR ENHANCEMENT

Civilisation 2 is both a refinement of the original and a major enhancement. Naturally, the first thing you'll notice is the new isometric viewpoint. It's all a bit unnecessary really

as no real benefit is gained apart from a slightly heightened sense of (un-needed) realism, in fact, moving units around can often be confusing as the viewpoint is twisted diagonally instead of a cleaner Warcraft/Command & Conquer style overhead view. A grid overlay is an option that helps it make a bit more sense, as does the unusual but surprisingly effective approach of turning the keyboard so the numeric keys used for movement correspond with the map layout. Strange but true.

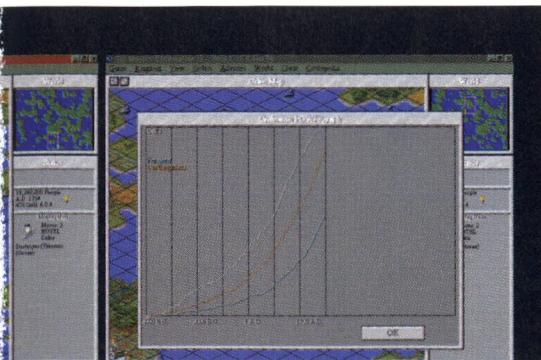
Major efforts have gone into making interface as effortless as possible. Intensive mouse work is needed because it's just that sort of game, but the load is lightened by the thoughtful inclusion of many user-friendly features. Windows can be sized and positioned to suit your style, in the default mode the side bar is a little large and intrusive, no worries, just drag it down to size. Similarly the main map screen can be made as large or as small as you want. Custom windows can be created that provide a set view of wherever you want - like a permanent display of your foe's capital city or that vital ocean choke point so you can see them coming. A seemingly minor but amazingly useful new feature is the ability to scroll through each of your city's status screens. In the old days a "city check" meant clicking on each of the cities individually on the map, tiresome, boring and a little bit stupid it was. Now if you have

a need to see it all just bring up any old city and scroll through the lot with the arrow keys. Fabulous! This is especially useful if you need to alter the production of all your cities, like when you achieve industrialisation and want (need) a factory in every town.

ABSORBING HYPERLINKED DATABASE

Also given the sensible treatment are the advances screens. Now whenever you achieve a new level of technology a hyperlinked database is accessible from the window that announced the good news. Your recent advance is presented as part of a tree that shows what led to it and where it leads. Clicking on any of the related advances brings up a fantastic history lesson that, while not Encarta, is just as absorbing. More usefully, it'll show the benefits of pursuing that particular line of research, as well as banishing forever the need to take up half your desk space with the old advances charts of the original. Take a moment from being amazed at the brilliant design and hit the "Goal" button, it'll tell you which advances to research if you want to head straight for an advance a little way down the line. Perfect.

Besides being a hell of a lot friendlier to play, Civilisation 2 is virtually a new game in the mechanics dept. While many of the units may seem familiar, their attributes have been tweaked - sometimes a subtle touch, usually a radical revamp. Case in point: in the original ►





◀ Civilisation sending what ought to have been a mighty Battleship against what ought to have been a lowly Trireme was fraught with danger. Much too often the straw-hulled Trireme would mysteriously manage to sink the not-so titanic Battleship. It was one of the most frustrating quirks in computer gaming. No more! Despatch that fleet with confidence and laugh gleefully when your battleship reliably takes out just about anything except an equivalent unit. Any damage it takes is gradually repaired each turn too.

NEW TOYS

Besides more predictable original units, Civilisation 2 gives you many entirely new toys to play with. Cruise Missiles, Stealth Bombers and Fighters (advances upon the still present basic air units, not replacements for them), Partisan Troops, Howitzers and a hell of a lot more. The overall effect is that the game is now far more balanced and that it has a considerably greater scope. Careful thought appears to have gone into the reinventing of the game, it doesn't feel for a moment that these new toys are token inclusions to bulk out the game and justify the "2", instead they fit in perfectly as a natural evolution to the gameplay.

No aspect of the game has escaped the attention of the renovators, aside from new attributes, the units now have different price tags. It balances the game, you'll have to work harder and consider more carefully before splashing out on powerful weapons. Entirely new tactics can now be employed, settlers can now build Air Bases anywhere on the map. This negates the need of old to build up a massive Carrier fleet, instead you can merrily build these cheap and quick runways on islands nearby the enemy's continent, safely harassing their cities and effortlessly destroying any attackers before they get in



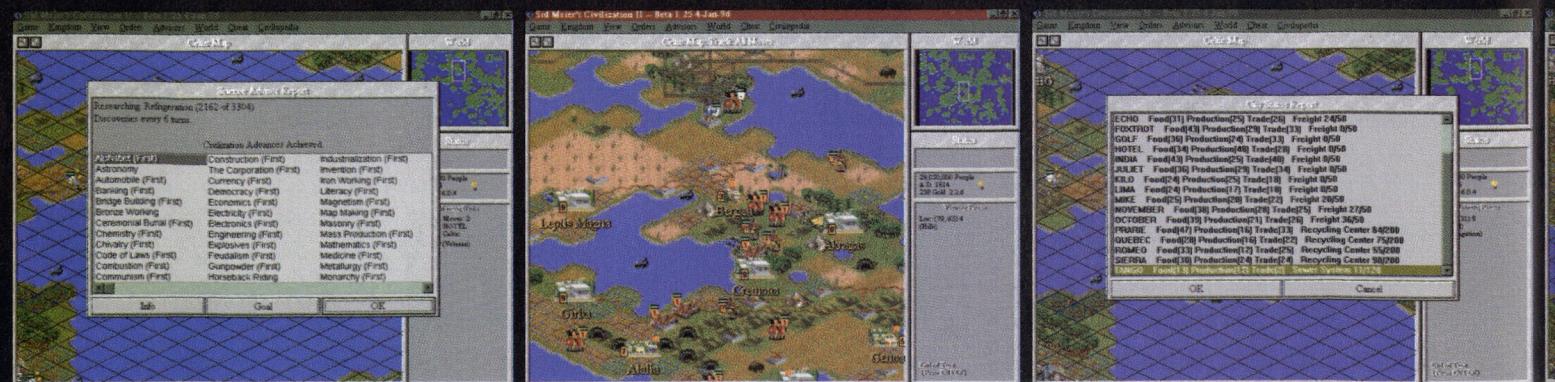
range. Care should be taken not to get too carried away though, as powerful as they are air units take damage and repair slowly too, so be sure to leave at least one healthy unit as an emergency reserve. Civilisation 2 is about advantage through scientific advancement though, so the aforementioned problem disappears once Stealth units and their immunity to defences become available.

COMPLETE GLOBAL DOMINATION

Other more extreme examples are common, like the new Leonards' Workshop wonder which automatically upgrades existing units when new ones become available. This is what Civilisation 2 is all about. Essentially it's a race to keep ahead in the technology race, while simultaneously fighting an everlasting territorial war with like-minded computer or human players.

Starting from scratch, the initial caper is to build three or four productive cities that will remain the backbone of your empire. About the time these cities are up and running you can reliably expect your first encounter with the enemy, this is when the

game kicks in and life gets complicated. From this point onwards each game takes on an unique flavour and could head in just about any direction. This is the beauty of the game, every play is a wildly different one and success is dependant upon both sticking to a general gameplan while being flexible enough to deal with whatever disasters/opportunities come your way. You may decide to deliberately confine yourself to just a few cities on a peninsula or island, then defend them heavily while concentrating on staying ahead in the technology race instead of busily expanding. Alternatively, going on an all out rampage from the word go is equally feasible, as is a controlled expansion over the course of a game, with the aim of complete global domination. However, the overall strategy you adopt will be undoubtedly be screwed with by an opponent determined to upset your carefully laid plans. This is what it's all about, Civilisation 2 asks for more of you than traditional strategy combat games. Besides having to manage the basics of tactical combat, you've also got to keep an eye of the big pictures of developing an effi-





cient economic system to keep it all running, as well as the ongoing quest of researching more potent and useful military units.

With so many make or break situations occurring on virtually every game turn, Civilisation 2 more than almost any other game is a tempting magnet for cheating. Saving before combat and reloading if it didn't work out the way you hoped is a common temptation, while greater opportunity for cheating comes in the form of "Serendipity Squares", these village icons are plentifully spread over the map and randomly provide good stuff in the form of free advances, units or cash, or bad in the form of Barbarian's or simply nothing at all. Warning! Don't cheat! It spoils the game utterly and transforms it from a sheer masterpiece to a dull "play once then shelve it" waste of time and money. In the original one had to quit to DOS and restart the game to reload a save game, this disincentive encouraged gamers to play it properly, but in the new game under Win95 you can effortlessly reload in a flash. This aspect, surprisingly, is about the only negative feature of the new game.

CUSTOMIZE THE GAME WORLD

Play it properly and you've got yourself a game that'll last for years. There are many options in the game that enhance its replayability even further. As with the original, you can customize the parameters by which the computer generates the game world. Land mass, temperature and rainfall, as well as the age of the world itself which influences how abundant minerals will be. A new addition to the sequel provides even greater scope for altering the style of the game, the "Flat World" option changes the "globe" into a traditional strategy game "board". It removes the ability of units to circumnavigate the game world, meaning that if you start in a corner you no longer need to defend all your borders, instead focusing on building up a rock-solid front line against attackers that can only come for you from one predictable direction. This seemingly minor new feature throws a whole new light on the game, adding an entirely new dimension to gameplay and significantly altering the way the game is played.

There are countless new features in the

sequel, none of them gratuitous, all of them logical and perfect. Colonisation - the first "official" sequel to the great game, was a shallow disappointment, CivNet catered only to a still minor segment of the gaming community, but Civilisation 2 has it all. It is immensely challenging, completely different every time you play and dangerously compulsive. If that sounds like the definition of the perfect computer game then so be it, for more than any strategy game so far, that is what you have with Civilisation 2. B.M.

B.M.

GRAPHICS	7
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	9
REPLAY	9
OVERALL	9

AS WITH THE ORIGINAL, CIVILISATION 2 RAISES THE STRATEGY STANDARD TO NEW HEIGHTS. LET THE CONQUEST BEGIN!

NEED: 486DX2/66, 8MB RAM(WIN 95)/4MB RAM (WIN 3.1) **WANT:** PENTIUM 75/DX4 100, 16MB RAM (WIN95)



THE TERMINATOR

THE ORIGINAL TERMINATOR MOVIE IS A TEMPTING GREAT SURPRISE TO SEE ANOTHER ONE, WHAT IS



FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	NOW
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	VIRGIN
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G8

“Wake up, it's a beautiful morning/Feel the sun shining for your eyes” (“Wake Up Boo!”) The Boo Radleys, 1995). Which is about as far removed from Terminator: Future Shock as is metaphorically possible. You see, TFS is a very dark game. All the action happens either on an endlessly dark night or through adjoining dark rooms and corridors. TFS is also a very blue game. So blue, in fact, that it's almost as if Bethesda couldn't get their much-vaunted 3D graphics system to cope with, a few more colours. But more on that later. For now, I'll simply say that TFS is easily the best very dark and very blue game I've ever played. And The Boo Radleys are a fine band indeed.

I'm unsure of the exact details of the plot, but I believe TFS is set sometime in the future, yet slightly before the events that were elaborated upon in the first Terminator film. You take on the role of a member of the resistance movement led by John Connor. At the beginning of the game you have just escaped from a prison camp armed only with a crowbar. After legging it away, you meet up with a

fellow rebel who is, sadly, near his final breath. His last words instruct you to head for a nearby hotel where you should find a car that will allow you to reach the rebel camp only facing minimal danger. Ha! Minimal danger? I don't think so.

Leaving your dying comrade, you'll immediately be set upon by walker robots spouting blue laser death as they mindlessly clank towards you. Luckily, a warning “Whreee! Creak!” will alert you to their presence. The same cannot be said of the floating kamikaze droids who home in on your position without making a sound and explode on contact with your unsuspecting body. They force you into a state of paranoia, constantly watching your back in case they leap out of the shadows. Both of these, even on their own, would be an unreasonably tough challenge to defeat with a mere crowbar, not to mention the huge mechanical spider that lurks on the outskirts of the death camp in level one.

Thankfully then, you should find an Uzi not far from the start as well as a stash of molotov cocktails. Thorough investigation of the abandoned buildings will net you plenty of useful items, too - medikits, armour, kevlar vests, and ammo clips. Even a highly effective assault rifle will be available to the more acrobatic and resourceful player. Later on you'll pick up the trusty shotgun, a formidable rocket launcher, the equally efficient grenade launcher, and the unique (to this

type of game, anyway) laser rifle complete with brilliant infra-red targeting sight.

Already you've probably made up your mind that this is just another Doom game. However, if you approached playing TFS with such expectations I think you'd be sorely disappointed. TFS may use a first-person view, it may have a large firearm poking up at the bottom of the screen, and it may involve a stupendous amount of carnage and destruction, but it is no generic Doom clone. TFS feels very different to Doom, Duke Nukem 3D, and the rest. It's slower for a start, opting for a more realistic walking or running pace. Aiming your weapons is a more precise activity, thanks to the inclusion of a specific crosshair (the Doom tactic of exaggerated, over the top strafing is extremely difficult to do, and not really useful either). In fact, to progress anywhere you'll have to ignore all your Doom instincts and adopt a completely new strategy. The keyboard is used to walk



FUTURE SHOCK

VEHICLE FOR A 1ST-PERSON GAME, SO IT'S NO SURPRISE IS JUST HOW GOOD IT IS.



around, jump, run, and select your weapons, while the mouse turns you head through 360° and fires your primary weapon. Remember, you're just a fairly normal bloke, not some unnaturally extraordinary super-hero. Attempting to keep your distance from the enemy, using cars as cover when on the ground and sniping from the safety of the roofs of shops, is the best way. Though annoyingly, you cannot crouch and move simultaneously.

A further difference is noticeable when you look up or down - it doesn't simply swing to 45° and then bounce back to normal (like some other games). No, you can virtually see what is directly above your head (especially handy when those helicopter things are circling around) or below your feet (again, vital when you're on a high ledge, building, mountain ridge, whatever). It's a bit like Descent, except you're walking around instead of flying. Well, for the first level at least. On later

stages you will take to the air in a very cool helicopter, and on level two there's that car I mentioned earlier. These are controlled in the same way as walking - keyboard for driving and steering, mouse for looking and shooting.

TFS offers a new slant on the tried and tested Doom formula. The control system makes the game more involving and really draws you into the realistic game world Bethesda have created. The way the plot updates between stages when you meet up with your resistance mates, and how you keep in radio contact with them during the level is excellent and adds far more to the atmosphere than you might anticipate. The graphics are hugely evocative and moody. Their lack of colour is overcome by the variety of the landscapes (one minute your wandering the city streets, next your rummaging through stores, climbing mountain trails, searching the gleaming barracks of a hideous concentration camp, or sloshing along sur-

prisingly clean sewer system), the incredible solidity of the structures, and the depth and realism of everything. Sadly, on anything less than a Pentium 100 you'll notice occasional slowdown and a few flaws in the line of sight, where objects appear more visible in your periphery vision than straight ahead. As well as some oddities in the sound effects, but it's nothing serious.

After playing Future Shock, I had my first glimpse of the latest Quake demo we had recently received. Perhaps the greatest recommendation I can make is that Quake just didn't seem all that revolutionary any more. D.W.

GRAPHICS	9
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	9
REPLAY	8
OVERALL	9

NEED: 486DX/66, 8MB RAM. WANT: P100



SPYCRAFT:

WHAT'S A SPY TO DO WITHOUT THE COLD WAR?
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO GO - THEIR EXPERTISE

FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	APRIL
CATEGORY	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	MA15+

Spycraft, the new-world espionage thriller set at the end of the cold war, looks to redefine gaming standards set by software houses to date. It has the best user interface I've seen in a long time, and the excessively credible guiding assistance of William Colby, former director of the CIA, and Oleg Kalugin, former major general of the KGB.

In Spycraft, you become Agent Thorn. Thrust into the world of international espionage, you take on a New World Order consisting of drug traffickers, nuclear arsenals, deep set double-agents and traitors who will sell out their country for sex and money.

Depicted at the end of the cold war, the lines between ally and enemy have been severely blurred, setting the stage for the two world superpowers to collaborate.

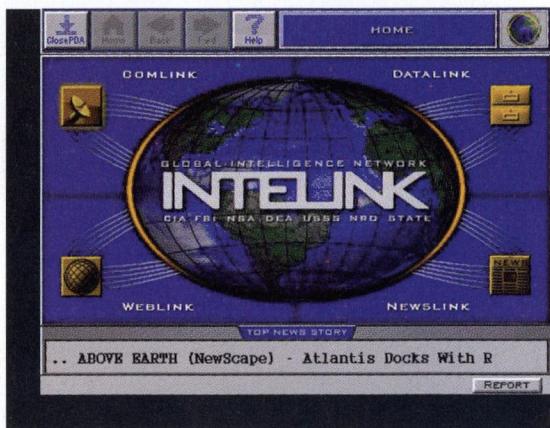
In a new trend that Activision seem quite set in, Spycraft is for Windows 95 only. Even from the install you can tell that Spycraft is a very serious game, as you are prompted with a window that informs you that there are scenes in the game that some could find dis-

ressing and offensive. Of note was the option to turn off the "torture scenes". On the topic of disturbing scenes, although not abundant, there is at least one scene where the Russian President is assassinated with a shot to the head. The accompanying video graphically shows his execution.

Acting is improving in computer games, and the actors in Spycraft are convincing, enjoyable to watch and do a remarkable job considering that all of the full motion video is presented to you in the first person. By simply referring to you as Thorn, whether you're a man or woman, the first person perspective still works. The experience was easy and comfortable to fit into, even to role play with. Sitting in meetings, when you are being addressed, the actor looks at you, so convincing was this, that whilst being given my orders I found myself nodding my head.

The user interface in Spycraft is a giant leap in the right direction for computer games, easily one of the best in the market. Simple to use, it is very graphical and revolves around a point & click affair. A lot of games these days rely on pull-down menus, or moving the mouse to an area of the screen and selecting an icon. In Spycraft, you have a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) instead.

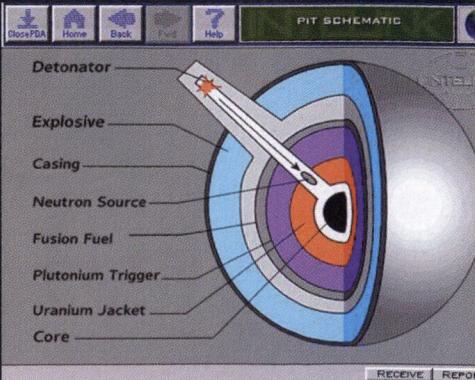
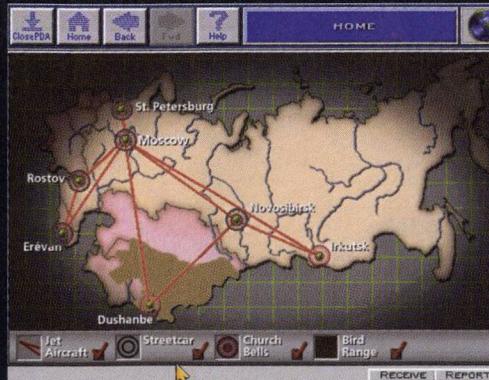
The PDA is full screen and in a brilliant stroke of game design, is based around a common Web Browser. As per your normal



browser, the PDA has a toolbar consisting of: Close (PDA), Home, Back, Forward and Help.

Directly beneath is where all the information is displayed. This happy solution to common gaming problems let's you play with: The Comlink button for receiving email, sound recordings and video mail (all encrypted of course), the Datalink button, to access all the files you require in your investigative journey, Newslink, which contains the fictional messages and news updates that the player will receive periodically and Weblink, which allows you to interact with other Spycraft players on the Internet.

All information in the game is accessed via the PDA, email regularly comes in with vital clues, or congratulations on an arrest. Video communications come in from superior



THE GREAT GAME

IN THE CASE OF THE HEADS OF THE CIA AND KGB,
SHOWS IN THIS REVOLUTIONARY GAME.



officers and your colleagues out in the field, sent as digitally recorded messages you can play back. Often messages have "hypertext links" eg. If a colleague mails you with a lead, their name will be printed in a different colour. Clicking on the name will automatically bring up the relevant information from the Datalink section. It's possible to sit back and "surf" all the information inside Spycraft as you would peruse the World Wide Web.

The gameplay in Spycraft is varied and very enjoyable, though in what is becoming more common in modern computer games, somewhat easy. Most elements are puzzle based, and revolve around using a series of tools. There are many at your disposal, for example there's the BADMAN for directing strikes through a building, the KAT (Kenendy

Assassination Tools) for plotting the trajectory of bullets in a simulated environment. MIX-AND-MATCH to find a match in the mug shot database, or the MAP TOOL, which locates a person by mapping the sounds heard in the background of a phone call.

The tools themselves aren't necessarily the puzzle, but by the combination of their use, information picked up by other field agents, and information you yourself pick out from browsing the data on your PDA, is how the game is progressed. For example, when in Russia, an informant "Birdsong" flees. The only information you have to go on is from a phone call he made. Using a tool that discerns sound from the recording of the conversation, you pin point his location. By selecting small sound bites, a type of aircraft is identified, a tram, church bell, and even a territorial sparrow. Taking this newly acquired information into the MAP-TOOL allows you to locate his whereabouts.

Besides puzzles, situations do arise where you have to "shoot your way through". Using the mouse to move, if you enter an area populated by a hostile, the movement cursor turns into a cross hair where you aim and eliminate the threat.

Finally, in a surprising move that is bound to set a new gaming standard, Activision has enlisted the use of the "Information Super-hype way". Providing you

have an Internet connection, selecting the "Add online" function from the Spycraft start-up menu initially brings up a help window explaining how to download a file from the Activision Home Page. Once downloaded, the program makes a change to your Netscape browser. Whilst in the game, selecting Weblink will bring up your browser and take you to a special web site dedicated to the online gaming aspect of Spycraft.

Those that go online will be able to Hotlink to authentic intelligence Web sites such as the CIA, FBI and Secret Service. Chat live with other players at any time of the day, post and view messages or participate in live online conferences with intelligence veterans - William Colby (former CIA Director) and Oleg Kalugin (former KGB Major General).

Spycraft the great game has all the feel of a Tom Clancy novel, with superb full motion video, professionally produced sound and varied entertaining gameplay, you really can't go wrong.

J.L.

GRAPHICS	9
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	9
REPLAY	9
OVERALL	9

NEED: 486DX2/66, 8MB RAM, 2 SPEED CD, WIN 95. **WANT:** PENTIUM 90, 16 MB RAM.



ACCLAIM

BESIDES BREAKING CONVENTION WITH IT'S NAME,
THAT MIXES A BIT OF FIRST-PERSON WITH

FORMAT	CD ROM
AVAILABLE	NOW
CATEGORY	INTERACTIVE MOVIE
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	M15+

We demand total absorption. The cover of the video *The Killing of America* expounds that "while you are reading the cover, an American is being murdered". Total absorption is offered within the bounds of the new game from Acclaim. Simply titled "D", it is cinematic in sweep and appropriates other features of the cinema experience in a two hour time frame. If one American is killed while spending thirty seconds reading the cover of a video, cast your mind to the potential of two hours of interactive nightmare. Here two worlds collide; the 240 statistical murders are a distant fact to the visceral reality of "D".

Dr Richter Harris (should that be Hannibal Lecter or Thomas Harris?) has become a mass murderer with corpses strewn throughout a general hospital on the outskirts of Los Angeles. In an intense opening sequence, Richter's daughter Laura races from San Francisco to offer her familial services in

the face of, no doubt, an ineffectual police force, CIA and FBI.

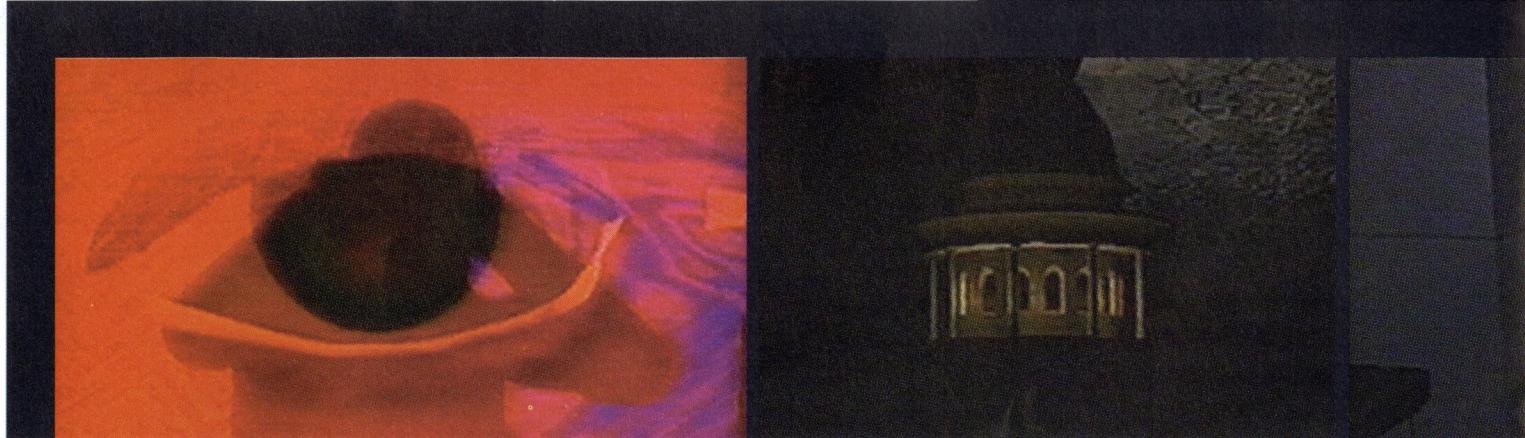
Upon entering the carnage, you (Laura that is) are consumed by a large swirling mucous-like blob (the press release preferred the adjective "abyss-like") that warps you to a mysterious old castle just begging to be explored. Richter's voice warns you to leave before he is completely inspired by the Unholy Ghost! Amid a myriad of plot-hinting flashbacks there's no way any self respecting, psychotically fascinated player will comply with the exhortations of an unseen...voice?! It is an offer too good to obey; let the quest for more blood continue.

Actually the aim is to solve the mystery, though it is a fine line when graphics as good as these are choreographed with a cliched but highly appropriate thriller soundtrack of crescendos every step of the way. In a class of its own, "D" actually manipulates fully computer rendered and realistic 3-D graphics instead of actors. With the aid of an artistic eye in the design process and directorial abilities akin to the best in Hollywood, this is the first game that truly can live up to the rubric of "interactive movie".

Seen completely through the eyes of Laura, game-play involves directing her through the castle by using the keypad arrows. Requiring almost no instances of

physical dexterity, the point is to explore each room and slowly but surely piece together the mystery amid seemingly indecipherable clues and grim surprises. Throughout the game numerous items will be found that can be manipulated in various ways. Everything is potentially helpful or harmful but beyond rudimentary keypad commands (only the space bar and the letter "I" are used, besides cursor keys for movement), the game relies on logic and psychological stability.

To evoke further the notion of this game being like a movie there is a two hour time limit. This is the assumption but a time limit actually proves frustrating given that the game cannot be restarted at a previously reached point. Instead of enriching the poten-



S' D

D ENTERS NEW TERRITORY WITH GAMEPLAY 7TH GUEST-STYLE MYSTERY.

tial of the game it can prove tedious to sit through the opening sequence for the nth time and consequently having to retrace all previous steps taken. To exacerbate this situation, Laura's movement is slow and the player must wait for each sequence to finish before using the keyboard again.

Alas, then, your computer may get a solid physical work-out - hitting the keyboard and hard drive are just as compelling as finding corpses and helpful items. My computer cowers in the corner now; I will not be happy until it bleeds.

Despite these short-comings, the Japanese precedent alone seems to point to success amongst discerning game players. Developed by Kenji Eno, chief programmer of Warp, and

with an established cult following in Japan, 200 000 units of "D" were sold within the first two weeks there. In such a pacifist culture as that which the Japanese enjoy it seems the previously American dominated penchant for mass murder has found its yen elsewhere. The phenomenal sales are even more surprising given the fact that the Japanese market has previously been averse to mass consumption of PC games.

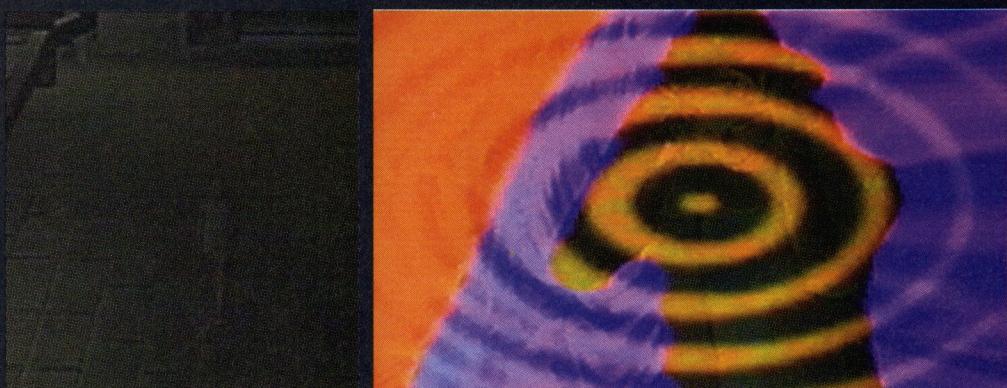
With well over 40 hours of playing time and consequently many possible conclusions depending on what the player decides to do and how long it actually takes to complete the game, the concept of an "interactive movie" is finally fulfilled after many spurious attempts by past games designers. It can be

frustrating to go nowhere fast, particularly if two hours elapse and the castle still seems as intractable as at the beginning but it is well worth persevering with. "D" issues in a new generation in PC games; it captures the essence of our troubled times and more importantly, it seduces even the most stoic of cynics into its psychological tapestry. M.B.

GRAPHICS	8
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	7
REPLAY	5
OVERALL	8

NEED: 486DX2/66, 8 MB RAM, 2 X SPEED CD.

WANT: 4 X SPEED CD ROM.



TOP GUN:

WING COMMANDER IN A JET FIGHTER? SIMPLE ARCADE CUT-SCENES SHOULD PLEASE ALL BUT DEDICATED



FORMAT	CD ROM (2)
AVAILABLE	NOW
CATEGORY	FLYING GAME
PLAYERS	1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER	SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G

Top Gun is not a flight sim, nor does it claim to be. On the box it says "You saw the movie, now play it", and this is exactly what you do.

This whimsical approach to PC flying comes from none other than Spectrum Holobyte. These are the people that gave the world Falcon 3.0, which in terms of realism is the complete opposite to Top Gun.

After installing the game you are treated to a small movie which sets the scene and puts you into character as Maverick. So flex your pecs, don you Ray Bans and yell "Where's the apple pie Maaa!" in an annoying American accent. The cut scene movies are all full screen even on a DX2/66 and run quite smoothly from a double speed CDROM, some of the speech did get out of sync, but not often. The scenes are well acted and there is lots of footage of real carrier action, launching Tomcats etc. It all helps set the mood, which is what this game is all about really. The dialogue is very gung ho American, which becomes monotonous after a while. Basically the game play follows a set

formula - you watch a movie, see a briefing map and data, then fly the mission.

The missions are as varied as a dedicated air intercept fighter's missions could be, but the actual air combat is not. Basically you get within missile range and launch, that's it. This is the type of game where you put the throttle to full bore and leave it there. When it comes to gun kills you just keep firing until you hit something. This game is for people who want to fly an air-combat sim but want something that looks good, is fun, and is easy to master. After a short stay at Top Gun fighter school you head off to fry some Cubans, and other foreign nationals. Just like the real US armed forces really.

The actual game play is very simple, a good indicator of what to expect is the fact that there are about as many buttons for

viewing the action as there are for flying the aircraft. In fact, the autopilot can take off, fly the whole mission and land without any player input, you can just sit back, switching views, and enjoy the show. This is the real idea behind the game, it really is like being in the movie. When there is a game event, like your wingman launching, a little window will pop up and you will see your wingman's Tomcat leaving the carrier. Likewise, when you launch a missile you will get a remote view of the missile dropping off the rail and firing.

The attention to detail is good, your aircraft takes off with the missiles you selected hanging off it, if your cockpit display says you have two sidewinders left, you can switch to an outside view and there they are. All the control surfaces of the aircraft move as they



FIRE AT WILL

ACTION AND KNOCK-OUT
SIM FANS. FUN IS FUN AND SO IS TOP GUN.



should, when you let the autopilot land you will see the landing gear and arrester hook lower from the fuselage as well as the ailerons, elevators flaps and slats moving on the wings. When manoeuvring at high G and high speed you see white streams from the wings and wingtips where the force of your manoeuvre has actually compressed the air to visible vapour. The action all looks real while being very easy to control.

You will hear lots of aviator style dialogue in the air and on the ground which enhances the experience for the wanna-be Maverick, but will attract derision from serious folks. It all sounds very fighter-jockish but it doesn't mean much and you don't need to know what it means anyway. It's just there to make you feel like a fighter pilot, just like the colourful graphics.

When flying the missions you have 360 degree radar so nobody is going to sneak up behind you. Whenever you get disoriented or just bored you can switch on the autopilot and play with the view controls. Time compression comes in handy too. It is hard to tell your altitude by looking out the window, which is annoying after you've flown into the ground a few times. The combat will soon become predictable. Also, the window that shows the aircraft you are tracking does not actually correspond to the heading of the aircraft, so even though the picture shows its nose pointing east it could actually be moving west. This is very disorientating until you figure out what's going on.

There is no point buying this game if you don't own a Pentium because it just looks too horrible in low res. This is positively not a

flight sim either (surprising considering it's parentage - Spectrum Holobyte gave the world Falcon 3.0, after all), it's a movie that you play, if you buy it for the flying you will feel horribly ripped off. It will appeal to the person who wants to play a jet style shoot em up with a bit of a story line to keep them interested between shooting down MiGs. P.T.

GRAPHICS	7
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	6
REPLAY	4
OVERALL	6

NEED: 486DX, 8MB RAM, 2X CD, 45MB HDD
SPACE. **WANT:** P75+, 8MB RAM, 2X CD, 200MB HDD SPACE, THRUSTMASTER OR CH STICK OF JOY.



REVIEWS

EXTREME GAMES

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	RACING
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	\$99.95
RATING	G
AVAILABLE	TBA

Baseball caps. Large shorts. Baggy shirts. Skateboards. Roller blades. Radical dudes. This is the stuff of which Sony's Extreme Games is made. It truly is the poor man's Road Rash. Not that that's something to be sad about because Road Rash, if you were unaware, is undoubtedly a classic console racing game. Extreme Games tries hard to emulate it, but ends up falling slightly short. Perhaps after an elbow in the face resulting in an undignified sprawl along the pavement.

You choose for yourself one of the aforementioned "radical

dudes", pick a mode of transport (skateboard, mountain bike, roller blades or street luge) then head off for your first race in San Francisco. The track through the city streets is quite lengthy and the sixteen competitors quickly become spread out. When jostling for position you can employ a deft side-kick or punch to knock your rivals off balance and hopefully send them head over heels into the ground.

There's a season play in which you progress through the five races, accumulating points and upgrading your equipment - though when I played it seemed to be bugged (I did all five races twice over then the first two again for a third time, before I was suddenly switched to another "radical dude" and lost half my points. Tsk.) Exhibition mode is a one-off race for two-players on

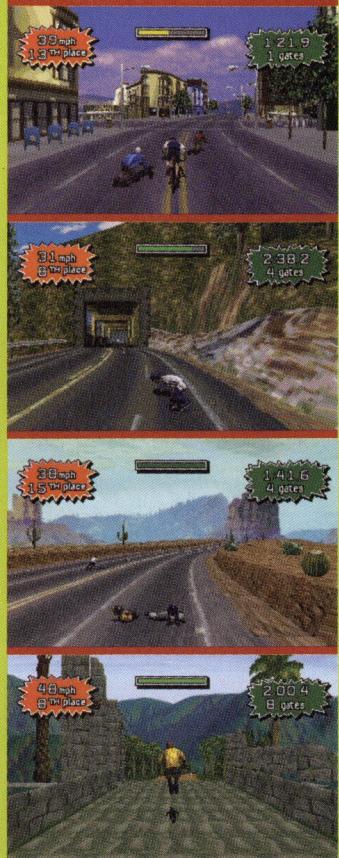
any track you desire. Visually, it is nice and moves smoothly at maximum detail on a P100.

I've played this on the Playstation and, to be honest, I didn't enjoy this version as much (something about "console psychology" and "lower expectations"). It's still fun, though hardly essential. If, in six months time, you see Extreme Games sitting there on the shelf, looking lonely and no doubt somewhat embarrassed by the "50% Off" sticker upon its breast, pick it up, dust it down and make sure you provide it with a loving home.

D.W.

GRAPHICS	7
AUDIO	4
GAMEPLAY	6
REPLAY	5
OVERALL	6

NEED: 486/33, 8MB RAM
WANT: 486DX2/66



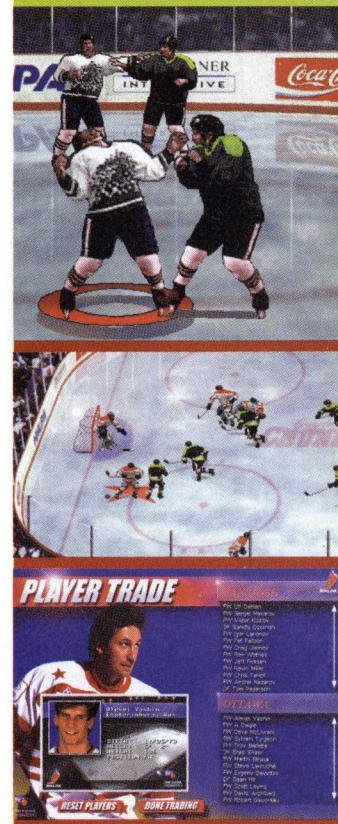
WAYNE GRETZKY

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	SPORT
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE
PRICE	\$89.95
RATING	G
AVAILABLE	NOW

After breezing through the friendly installation procedure, I loaded up Wayne Gretzky & The NHLPA Allstars and was greeted by a fast-edited video clip accompanied by a quite horrible ROCK soundtrack.

Once the game I selected the Easy difficulty setting and the no-holds-barred Arcade option where the refs turn a blind eye to all but a hockey stick skewered through your opponent's abdomen. I chose to be the Detroit Red Wings, then it was straight into the massive Championship Season mode.

WAYNE GRETZKY & THE NHLPA ALLSTARS



My first game, against Edmonton, went like this - I win the face-off, skate up the ice to the goal, I shoot, the keeper saves it, Edmonton skate up the ice, they shoot, my keeper saves it, I skate up the ice, I shoot, the keeper saves, they skate up the ice, shoot and my keeper saves, I skate up the ice, etc, etc. And so it finished 0-0. I nip out to the

Options screen and change to the hardest setting. Next game was exactly the same, 0-0. And so was the next one. During the next four games I cunningly decide to leave the joystick alone for the whole time, just to see what happens. I lose one 0-1 in normal time, two 0-1 after penalty shots, and one 1-2 also after penalties. Yes, that's right, in FOUR games where I didn't take any part in the play (each time my players accidentally intercepted the puck they simply stopped still and

waited to be tackled) I conceded only TWO goals during normal time and, incredibly, managed to even score ONE myself. And during the THREE penalty shoot-outs I played, I conceded only THREE goals out of the TWELVE or so attempts the collective opposition would have had.

Gretzky also features some dreadful graphical glitches, like being able to poke your stick through the goal net and hit the puck on the other side, as well as a pointless fighting section, which might have been okay were it not so laughably feeble. This is a terrible game.

GRAPHICS	3
AUDIO	5
GAMEPLAY	2
REPLAY	1
OVERALL	2

NEED: 486DX/50, 4MB RAM, 2x SPEED CD, 1MB SVGA CARD
WANT: 8MB RAM

ASSAULT RIGS

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	SHOOT 'EM UP
PLAYERS	1-NETWORK
PUBLISHER	PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	TBA
RATING	TBA
AVAILABLE	TBA

Assault Rigs is yet further proof that the purchase of a Playstation by any self-respecting PC owner is totally unnecessary. I say this not because I am biased towards the PC and against Sony, but because Assault Rigs is one of countless Playstation games making the voyage across to the PC. And, notwithstanding the odd bout of seasickness (hello, Extreme Games), all have faced only the calmest of waters along the way and disembarked as highly competent conversions. Assault Rigs is no exception to this.

Unfortunately, it wasn't a particu-

larly great game to begin with.

The Assault Rigs in question are tanks, heaps of tanks. Tanks that are thrust into a 3D arena where they must collect a requirement of crystals and then find the exit. Lurking amongst the tight, twisty, turny passageways are numerous mechanical creatures, be they other tanks, stationary gun turrets, bouncing balls, flying things, landmines and yet more tanks. You try to shoot them and they try to shoot you. Except that when you shoot them, if you hang around too long or leave and then return, they reappear and start shooting you again. Aaargh! Regeneration, I despise its unfair and nonsensical nature.

Many different tanks and viewpoints are available. The top down view makes it an almost new game, while the straight for-

ward view is the most effective.

Beyond all that though, is the plain fact that Assault Rigs is simply a fairly sedate and, frankly, boring game. For a shoot 'em up it does little to get the heart racing and the puzzle elements (such as they are) aren't terribly taxing. I also feel that Psygnosis erred with either their choice of vehicle or their terrain designs - the tanks are uniformly useless at negotiating the levels, meaning you frequently get stuck or overturn completely. And, finally, a question for you (and Psygnosis) - how the hell does a tank strafe?

D.W.

GRAPHICS	6
AUDIO	5
GAMEPLAY	5
REPLAY	3
OVERALL	5

NEED: 486DX2/66, 8MB RAM
WANT: PENTIUM 60



TEMPEST 2000

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	SHOOT 'EM UP
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	ATARI
PRICE	\$59.95
RATING	6
AVAILABLE	NOW

Tempest - wild, whipping, whirling, chaotic, catastrophic, exciting, exhilarating, UNRELENTING.

Tempest 2000 - pretty much the same. A pure, arcade adrenalin rush. Primitive (it is a conversion of the Atari Jaguar title - still, incidentally, the only reason to own a Jaguar - which, in turn, was an update of the 1980 Atari coin-op classic and, thus, the reason why the gratuitous futuristic date is compulsory) but, of course, highly playable.

Level One bursts onto the screen with you (as a yellow thing that looks like a claw) look-



ing down the centre of a massive blue cylinder miraculously floating in space. Sinister red squiggles begin charging and shooting up the walls headed straight for you. Fortunately, you can scoot around the rim and blast great dollops of laser fire all over the place. Power-ups are quickly found in the shape of laser boosts, recharges, extra lives, a jump facility, and best of all, the AI droid (he's your little cubic chum who can almost annihilate an entire level on his own). Clear the level and you move onto the next (even harder) geometric construction floating in space, accompanied by a sultry female voice announcing "Superzapper Recharge!" or "Yes! Yes! YES!" in a strangely excited way. Later you'll engage in gentlemanly combat with purple pointy things, green spirally things, electric swirlies things, swift red

diamonds and huge demonic goat heads.

Initially, Tempest 2000 is maddeningly hard, Practice improves the situation, obviously. As does the gloriously thrilling graphics - enormous explosions, bold vibrant colours, score and bonus messages trying to leap out of the monitor and kiss your wide eyes.

The most impressive aspect of Tempest 2000 is that, although it can be terribly annoying, it is always so in a completely fair way. When you die, it is ALWAYS YOUR FAULT. When you die, you instantly press restart. And die again. Perfect.

D.W.

GRAPHICS	7
AUDIO	7
GAMEPLAY	9
REPLAY	10
OVERALL	9

NEED: 486SX/33, 2MB RAM
WANT: JOYPAD

REVIEWS

MASTER LEVELS FOR DOOM II

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	ACTION
PLAYERS	1-4
PUBLISHER	id SOFTWARE
PRICE	\$89.95
RATING	MA15+
AVAILABLE	NOW

Master Levels are a snack to tide us over until the release of Quake. Unfortunately, it will hardly dent your appetite for something new. This is basically the result of id software paying people who published decent wads on the Internet to build custom, commercial levels for one-player Doom2. These 20 special levels are of unquestionably spiffing quality in terms of architecture, visual effects, amazing tricks of dynamic spatial adjustment and wickedly sudden teleporting. The only bad part about these levels is their uniformly medium size, which equates to quite a

small playing time for each level, so it doesn't take the Experienced Doomer more than about a week of play to complete all of these twenty "Master" wads on the new Doom disc.

In the long-term, Doom has much more longevity when played networked against other people. When Deathmatch becomes the usual format of the Doom sessions you have, single-player levels by comparison seem slow, lonely, simplistic and pointless. The main reason you would look at a collection of more levels now is to find some decent ones for Deathmatch.

No Sprite Replacements are included on the disc, neither are there any wad level editors. As usual, the obligatory Dwango (a Doom multiplayer system for bulletin boards) client software is bundled on the disc along with encrypted compressions of

Doom1, Heretic, Ultimate Doom and a windows-based browser and decoder for when you suddenly feel the urge to purchase something else by credit card over the phone.

That sadly, is the entirety of what is contained on this CD-ROM. For the price of Doom2, you will have purchased twenty mildly amusing new levels, and 3,000 other ones, of which you will play about 15% before your brain completely fogs over. Follow the rest of the free world! - wait for commercial Quake. E.D.

GRAPHICS	3
AUDIO	3
GAMEPLAY	3
REPLAY	3
OVERALL	3

NEED: DOOM2, CD ROM, 386 DX/33, 4MB RAM.
WANT: PENTIUM OR DX4 100, 8MB RAM



GETTYSBURG

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	STRATEGY
PLAYERS	1-2
PUBLISHER	TALON SOFT
PRICE	\$89.95
RATING	G8
AVAILABLE	NOW

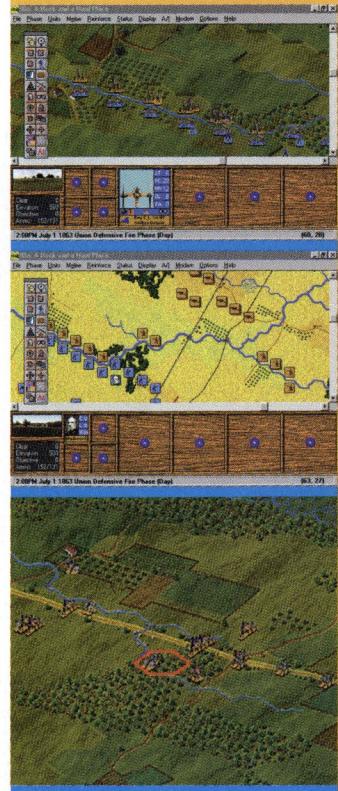
Battleground Gettysburg is an historical strategy game by Talon Soft, that deals with the epic confrontation between the armies of the North and the South on July 1-3, 1863.

Talon Soft took the time out in this game to get things right. The manual has been written intelligently and set out. As with the first game, however, the whole front end of the game is disappointing. The main title screen allows us to choose the battle we want to play by clicking on two scrolling windows. No graphics are present to give us

and immediate insight into the battle. The brief mission objectives are only that, brief; and offer no real incentive to play these scenarios through to their eventual conclusion.

One of the improvements in the game is the speed of the video when an action takes place. Unlike the first game where the action was restricted to a small box and took long seconds to load, the video has been greatly sped up. Unfortunately, this offers no real improvement in terms of gameplay as most gamers will turn the videos off after only the first few turns.

Having played the first game in the series, I was expecting the same sort of graphical detail that was present or rather, not present in the first game. I was extremely surprised to discover that the battle detail was exceptional. Each



hex is hand drawn and offers a diverse range of landscapes, with Talon Soft opting to draw whole forests by hand rather than by replicating a particular hex. These little features make all the difference.

Trains have little train tunnels and whilst the units themselves are tiny, a lot of detail has gone into them to make them look more believable.

Another of those games for fans of the genre, normal gamers looking for instant thrills will be best advised to look elsewhere. S.A.

GRAPHICS	8
AUDIO	8
GAMEPLAY	7
REPLAY	6
OVERALL	8

NEED: 386DX/33, 4MB RAM, 2X SPEED CD, WIN 3.1/95
WANT: 486, 8 MB RAM

ZORK PLACED MILLIONS UNDER ITS SPELL... THE SPELL IS YET TO BE BROKEN!

"ZORK NEMESIS
LOOKS TO BECOME
AS SUCCESSFUL AS
ITS PREDECESSOR...
HARDLY SURPRISING
WHEN YOU LOOK AT
THESE GRAPHICS".

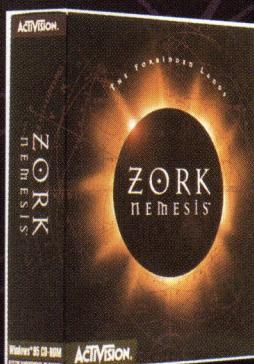
PC HOME, FEBRUARY 1996

"ZORK NEMESIS ISN'T
JUST A PRETTY FACE...
A SUPERIOR PLOT
PROGRESSION AND
A MORE HAUNTING
AND EVOCATIVE
ATMOSPHERE...
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT,
THIS GAME HAS THE
POTENTIAL TO BE
BRILLIANT"

PC REVIEW, MARCH 1996

"HEAD-TURNING,
MIND-BOGGLING,
PASSEBY-IMPRESSING
GRAPHICS...
BIGGER AND BETTER
THAN IT'S ILLUSTRIOS
PREDECESSOR"
PC ZONE, MAY 1996

ZORK NEMESIS™



AVAILABLE ON WIN '95 / DOS DUAL FORMAT. COMING SOON ON MACINTOSH

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REVIEWS

RIPPER

FORMAT	CD ROM(6)
CATEGORY	INTERACTIVE MOVIE
PLAYERS	1-4
PUBLISHER	TAKE 2
PRICE	\$89.95
RATING	MA15+
AVAILABLE	NOW

This very Californian cyber-trip into the future is, as the title suggests, a Jack the Ripper style story, only set in the near future where VR dominates the internet and a psychotic murderer (Jack) uses microscopic robots, called Nanobots; to shred people from the inside out. Ripper is an interactive FMV futuristic murder-mystery starring you as the dyed-blond leather-jacketed Jake Quinlan, rebel reporter dude who gets results by bending the rules.

Immersive it is, from the very beginning you are shown nothing but delicious Silicon Graphics environments carefully blended

with live actor video and a slick, intuitive mouse-controlled point & click interface.

Success in the game is basically measured by the care you take in slowly going through every scene, jotting down all the clues in your Organiser and talking to everyone until you run out of conversation options.

Unfortunately Ripper does contain a few of those infuriating puzzles which make sense only to the egghead that giggled and snorted loudly while he programmed them, luckily these are a minority.

Despite the gorgeous visuals, the atmosphere simply isn't constant, as you go from the sterile and quiet environment of the linked travelling animations (underscored by an ambient/industrial sort of slow grungy techno), to a suddenly bustling, noisy situation depicted

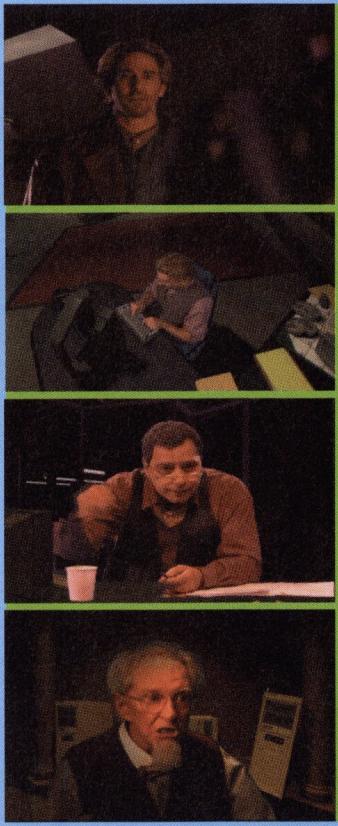
in the conversation cut-scenes.

Then, when the video scene ends, you are dumped back into the lonely, graphically brilliant but still sort of dull VR-ish environment. Some attempts at integration are there, such as little part-screen animations of the actors that loop smoothly while you click about, some of them amazingly still moving to scale when you glide past. The only problem is the game fails at being consistently entertaining, even though it's very realistic. These are minor gripes though, the overall quality is enough to warrant a serious look.

E.D.

GRAPHICS	9
AUDIO	8
GAMEPLAY	6
REPLAY	3
OVERALL	7

NEED: 486DX/33, 4MB RAM, 2X SPEED CD ROM
WANT: PENTIUM/DX4, 8MB RAM



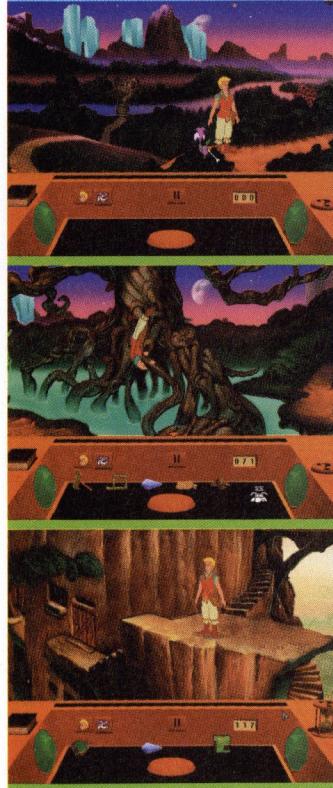
TORIN'S PASSAGE

FORMAT	CD ROM
CATEGORY	ADVENTURE
PLAYERS	1
PUBLISHER	SIERRA
PRICE	\$89.95
RATING	G
AVAILABLE	NOW

A game should grab your attention right from the start. Torin's Passage begins on a dark night, storm clouds closing in. In an expansive castle bedroom the King and Queen lie asleep. At the end of the room a baby stirs in its precarious, vulnerable cradle. She lets out a small cry yet is ignored by both parents. Her mother awakens only momentarily, seemingly unconcerned. It is clear however, that this is no plaintive call of tiredness or hunger. As the cry continues, you realise there is genuine fear in that tiny voice; a pure, instinctual sensation of terror.

Shadows rise and the storm hits. I was chilled.

As you might expect, it's all downhill from there. Torin's Passage was designed by Al Lowe and it is a pretty bog-standard Sierra adventure. Hence it has: A. A plot so sickeningly sentimental, so cringingly cute it's a veritable fowest of twee; B. Graphics that are uniformly lush and beautiful, but in that professional, slick and sterile Sierra style; C. Awkward, incongruous, and often downright silly puzzles to solve. Many are variations on the tedious sliding-block theme, while the rest are usually involve giving the right object to the appropriate person; and D. Absolutely no sense of humour whatsoever. Sure, it is supposed to be funny, but nearly all the so-called jokes simply fall complete-



ly flat and go nowhere near even raising a smile. On a more positive note, I liked the subtle yet pervasive undercurrent of evil throughout the game. Aside from the opening scenes, there's the hooded figure Torin meets at the start, the pitch black cave that feels and looks like a stale, lifeless mouth, and the plants that bear a foliage of deadly, gleaming razor-sharp blades. Other than that though, Torin's Passage remains a wholesome and wholly unexciting game experience.

D.W.

GRAPHICS	7
AUDIO	5
GAMEPLAY	5
REPLAY	1
OVERALL	5

NEED: 486/33, 8MB RAM, 2X SPEED CD, SVGA
WANT: PENTIUM 60, 16 MB RAM

RESURRECTION

RISE 2

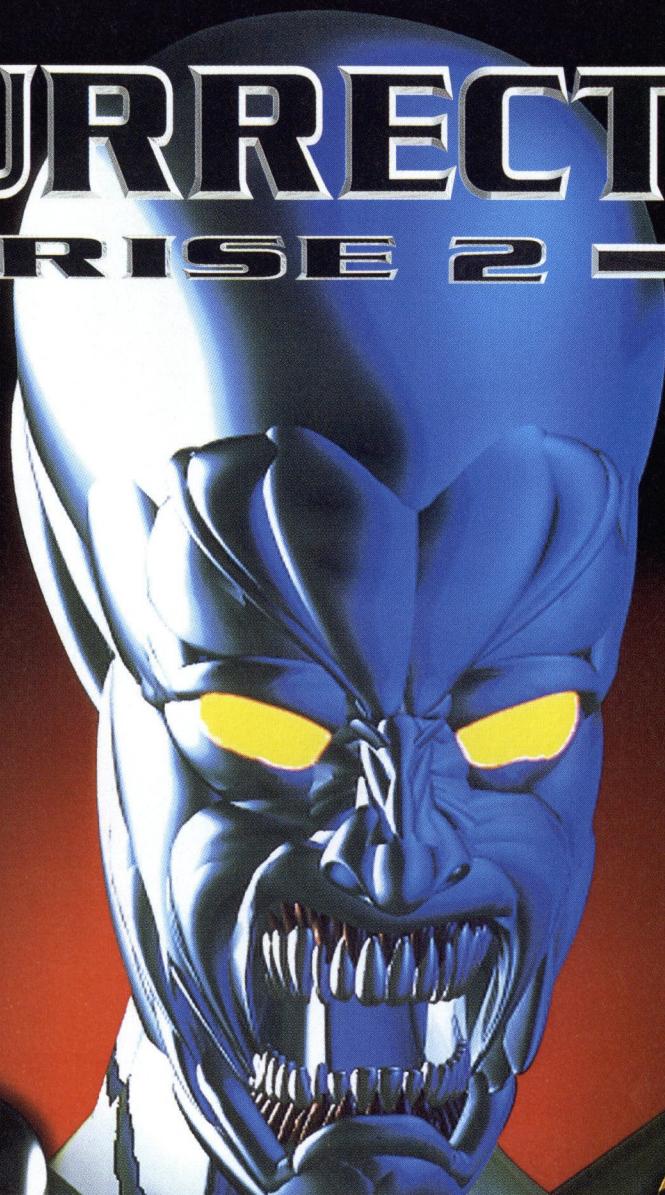
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METAL ON METAL
CRUNCH 'EM UP
COMBAT.

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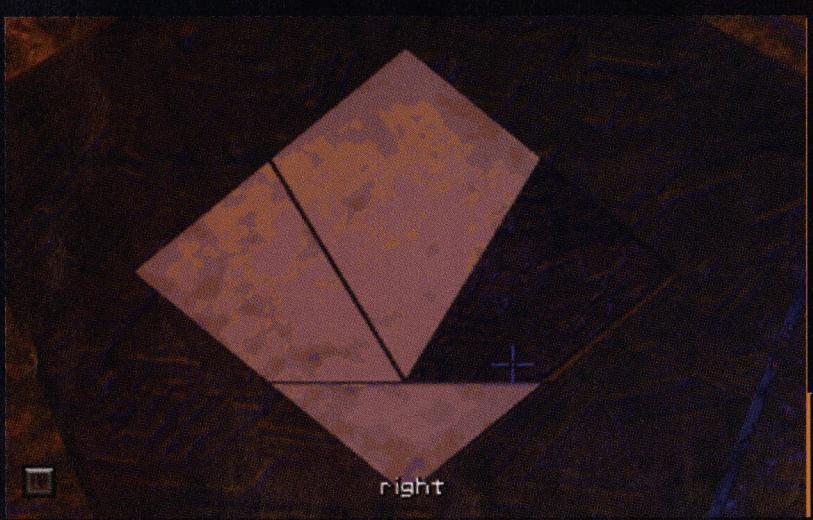
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THE DIG

IT'S



SPACE SHUTTLE

Talk to your crew and examine the FLYING PIG tool chest. Use the PEN ULTIMATE (check your inventory) to talk with Miles about the FLYING PIG. The PIG will be released into space. Click on the PIG and collect all the tools within. Fly into SPACE and use the PEN ULTIMATE to talk to Borden. He will inform you where to place the explosive units. Proceed to Quadrant 2 and find a TARGET SURFACE. Use the ZERO-G DIGGER on the TARGET SURFACE and place the EXPLOSIVE UNIT ALPHA on the DIRT. Use the ARMING KEY on the explosive and return to SPACE. Talk to Borden again and proceed to Quadrant 3. Use the SHOVEL with the BOULDER and then place the EXPLOSIVE UNIT BETA onto the SURFACE. Activate the explosive with the ARMING KEY and return to SPACE then the SPACE SHUTTLE. Talk to Borden once again and watch the explosion. Head back to the asteroid with your team.

ASTEROID

Examine the ODD PROJECTIONS and then use your ZERO-G DIGGER on them. Click on the METALLIC PLATES, and then enter the DARK TUNNEL. Deep inside the asteroid you will find a PEDESTAL. Move towards it and collect all the four PLATES. Click on the SQUARE INDENTATION and correctly place all the PLATES into the square. You will be transported to an alien planet in another solar system.

ALIEN PLANET

Walk to the CLEARING and click on the "?" to the left. You will discover an alien wreck. Click on the WRECK and open the CHEST. Collect the DEVICE and grab the HANGING WIRE. You should see the first of many ghostlike beings. Take the WIRE and the ENGRAVED ROD. Return to the CLEARING and move to the "?" at the top of the screen. At the graveyard use the SHOVEL on the grave. Pick up both the JAW-BONE and TUSK. Proceed back to

A TOUGH GAME, HERE'S THE EASY WAY



the CLEARING and walk to the "?" to the right of the screen. At the dirt ramp use the DEVICE and then the SHOVEL on the SMALL MOUND. Get the BRACELET and proceed to the DIAS (centre of the CLEARING). At the DIAS a ghost will appear. Use the SHOVEL on SMALL HOLE. Brink will fall into the hole and die. He will not stay dead for too long. Descend into the NEXUS with Maggie.

NEXUS

You and Maggie will part ways at this stage. Collect the PLATE and walk right until you find the PURPLE ROD. Examine the PURPLE ROD and make a note of the coloured shapes. This is the keycode to open the sealed doors surrounding you. Click on all the PANELS on the sealed doors and enter the keycodes. Proceed to the RAMP near the dark tunnel.

RAMP

Click on the EDGE and you will see a LOOSE LENS. You will need this to activate the power genera-

tor. Click on the CONTROL PANEL. There are seven buttons that control a robot. Each of button represents a colour. Make a note of the buttons and colours and press PURPLE four times, YELLOW twice and the RED once. Exit the CONTROL PANEL and click on the TRIANGULAR BUTTON. A robot will pick up the loose lens. Click on the CONTROL PANEL once more and press PURPLE five times, BLUE four times, and the RED once. Press the TRIANGULAR BUTTON once again to get the robot to restore power. Remove the LOOSE PLATE and take the BLUE CRYSTAL. Return to the Nexus. Walk through the open door and click on the ?, this is the tram call room. Get on the tram and it will take you to the Museum Spire.

MUSEUM SPIRE

Walk OUTSIDE and then UP. Click on the STRANGE DEVICE and then press the switch for a few seconds. A LIGHT BRIDGE will appear, if not simply move

the LENS and try again. Walk on the LIGHT BRIDGE and proceed through the door. Pick up the GLOWING CRYSTAL and the TABLET. Click on all the DISPLAYS to reveal some clues. Collect the RED ENGRAVED ROD and walk through the door to the left. You will find Maggie. Talk to her about all your artifacts and return to the Nexus where Brink died.

NEXUS

Use the GLOWING CRYSTALS on Brink. He will return from the dead. Use the TUSK on the panel nearest the SPARKS. Connect one end of the HANGING WIRE to the panel and the other to the SPARKS. Walk to the ALCOVE and click on the first PANEL to the right of it. Examine the RED ROD and use the keycode to open the door (same as before with PURPLE ROD). Walk through the door and press the tram call. No tram will arrive. Return to the MUSEUM with Brink and open the WEAKENED DOOR. Inside the

door is a pool of GLOWING CRYSTALS. Pick up the some CRYSTALS and the CANNISTER. Leave the room and head towards the water.

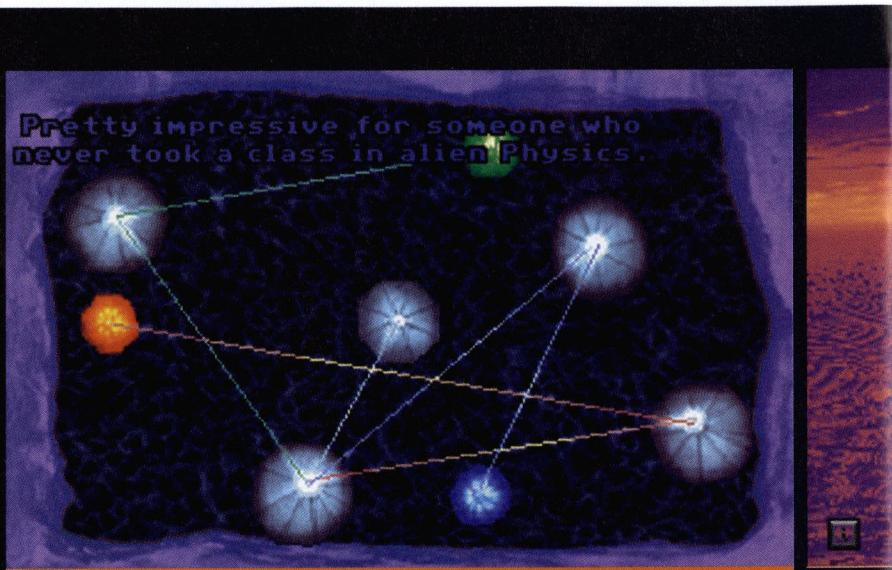
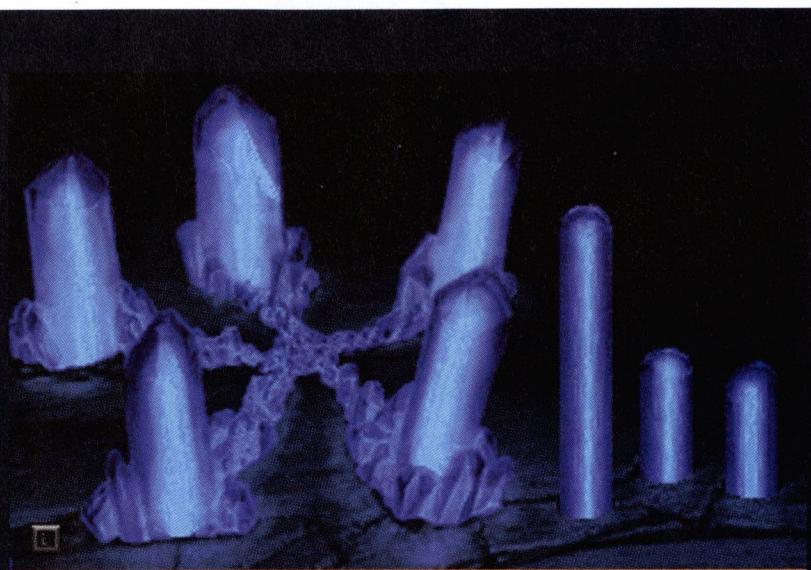
Examine the FOSSIL and then click on the LOOSE BONES at the water. Arrange the bones to look like the fossil and then use the CANNISTER with the DEAD CREATURE. Use the CRYSTALS on the DEAD CREATURE to set a trap for the sea monster. After the sea monster dies, jump into the WATER and you will automatically swim to the underwater cave. Enter the CHAMBER and collect both the PLATE and the ORANGE ENGRAVED ROD. Return to the Nexus. Unlock the door using the ORANGE ROD and walk through it. Press the TRAM CALL and board the TRAM.

PLANETARIUM SPIRE

Walk OUTSIDE and then UP. Click on the FAR SIDE and you will be carried over the canyon. Use the SHOVEL with the BOULDER to enable a safe passage



ALL THE HELP YOU NEED TO FI



back. Activate the LIGHT BRIDGE (don't forget to adjust the LENS if needed). Walk across the waterfall and enter the CREVICE. Pick up the BLUE CRYSTAL and then proceed to the PLATEAU behind the light bridge. An annoying critter will steal a component from the door panel that you need. Collect the DOWEL, RIB-CAGE, ROD, POLE and COVER. Use the DOWEL with the HOLE in the wagon wheel thingy and pick up another POLE. Insert the POLE into the DOWEL (now called a PIN) and use the RIB-CAGE with the POLE (now called a HOOK). Use the ROD with the RIB-CAGE. You have now set a trap, all you need to do is catch the critter. Firstly, click on the holes to make the critter run around, Stand between the wagon wheels and eventually the critter will make its way to the trap (you may need to click on the holes more than once). When the critter is in the right position activate the TRAP. Use the BRACELET on the CRITTER and then release it from the TRAP. Pick up the ROD and RIB-CAGE once again and enter the

CAVE. Use the DEVICE and then the SHOVEL on the TRACKER SPOT. Pick up the MACHINE PART and leave the CAVE. Return to the CLEARING and proceed to the CREVICE (located on far right). Collect the BLUE ROD and return to the Nexus.

NEXUS

Enter the DARK TUNNEL and click on the BUTTON. Open the AIR LOCK and press the BUTTON twice. Walk through the door and click on the GLOWING PANEL. Use the BLUE ROD with the hole and adjust the crystals so they shine. Change all black crystals to blue ones and then return to the Nexus.

Walk through the open door which leads to the broken tram. Push the tram button (it should work now) and enter the tram. At the Spire proceed to the Plateau and use the shovel with the STONE PLATE. Enter the hole and you will discover a tomb. Use the BLUE CRYSTAL with the HOLE and walk to the bottom of the screen. You should be standing on a secret floor panel with 2

moon crescents. Use the ROD with the LOOSE STONE and leave the tomb. Click on the dirt and then the path. Activate the lightbridge and walk to the Spire. You should be at the spot where the Critter stole the machine part.

Go to the Plateau and use the MACHINE PART with the PANEL. Replace the COVER and walk through the door. Get the GREEN ROD, TWIN SCEPTERS and the PLATE. Use the GOLD SCEPTER on the FAINT LIGHT. Click the same scepter on the PLANET and move the planet to the 2 o'clock position. Use the SIVER SCEPTER on the large moon and move it to the 7 o'clock position. Activate the button. Return to the Nexus.

Open the closed door with the GREEN ROD and walk through it. Use the tram and it will take you to the MAP SPIRE. Enter the opening at the top of the screen and click on the STRANGE FIELD. Proceed to the CAVERN and enter the PIT. Use all the Rods on the panel as you did with the door locks to reveal the hidden room. Click on the opening and turn on the lightbridge. It will not work

just yet. Open the PANEL and click on the SOURCE 3 times. Click on the BOTTOM prism 3 times, the TOP prism once and the LEFT prism 3 times. Use the light bridge and walk to the TOMB SPIRE and enter the tomb.

Click on the STATUE. Press the crypt twice and proceed LEFT. Use the life crystal on the bone besides the door to bypass the guard dog. Open the door with the ENGRAVED ROD. Use the ENGRAVED ROD to unlock the PYRAMID. Pour some LIFE CRYSTAL on the ALIEN BODY and return outside. If all is going well, Maggie should be kidnapped at this stage.

Walk along the path to the LIGHT BRIDGE. Open the panel and click on the switch. To repair the bridge make the light beam pass between the red and green crystals. Enter the CAVE INTERIOR and talk to Brink. Brink is too preoccupied to help you, so walk to the CAVE and light your FLASHLIGHT on the bat like creatures. Dig the CRYSTAL SLASH and collect all the LIFE CRYSTALS. Brink will offer to help you.



NISH THOSE TRICKY BITS IN THE GAME



Return to the MAP SPIRE.

Click on the nest and talk to Brink. Go to the source of the waterfalls. Push the BOULDER to block the water and return to the nest. Talk to Brink again. Brink and Maggie will open the GRATE and kill the alien monster. Walk to the beach with the strange light and examine the light. Give the TABLET to Maggie to uncover the HIDDEN ISLAND. Go to the island and pick up the last PLATE. Return to the Nexus and you will find Brink in a jam. Walk to the plateau and use the JAWBONE to release Brink.

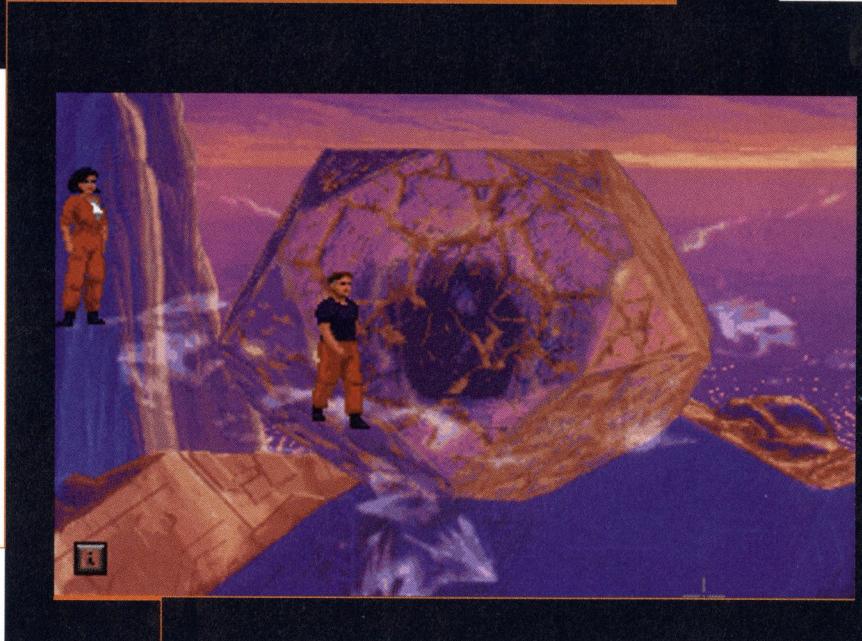
At the Nexus, put all the plates into the ALCOVE. Take the tram to the lab and examine the device at the bottom. Go UP and remove the nest. Collect a LIFE CRYSTAL from the museum and return to the TOMB. Revive the Alien again and ask him about the alien device. Accept the ROD he gives you. Walk to the map room again and enter the code in the map machine. It will highlight the beach with the missing part. Go to the beach and get the EYE. Go back to the lab.

ENDING

In the lab Brink will take all of your life crystals. Put the EYE into the gap and talk to Brink. Pick up the EYE part again and walk to the cave on the tomb island. Show Brink the EYE and make a deal with him. Put the EYE into the SLOT on the relic. Now take both glowing crystals and the EYE piece. Brink will attempt to stop you and accidentally kill himself. Put the EYE and the crystals into the console.

Ending 1: Talk to Maggie. Give her the glowing crystals. She will try and operate the machine and in the process kill herself. Walk to the lightbridge and move to the Eye in the centre of all the lightbridges. A guard dog will appear. De-activate the light bridge to bypass the dog and walk into the Eye. Now watch the game's final animation.

Ending 2: Go to the lightbridge and turn the bridge off and on. Proceed to the Eye and both you and Maggie walk through the portal to a happy ending. **H.M.**



WARCRAFT

WHETHER UP AGAINST THE COMPUTER OR TAKING ON OPPONENTS, WARCRAFT 2 OFFERS GOLD-PLATED

Warcraft 2 hit the big time because it successfully blended fiendishly clever gameplay with a beautiful interface that let you get on with being a brilliant tactician. It's a tough game though, whether you're up against a mate over the lines or taking on the computer AI, victory must be worked hard for. PowerPlay strategy guru's Simon Audcent and Davor Smolej show you the easy way...

WINNING WAYS.

PEASANTS. Peasants are your most valuable commodity, without them you cannot succeed. A little over 20 will provide a nice, steady supply of gold coming in. When you're finished with one gold mine, move on to the next and build a new Town Hall as close as you can to it. Don't worry about upgrading to a Keep or Castle though, as long as one of your Town halls is upgraded, it will affect the rest of them.

AIR UNITS. In large groups, air units can be very deadly. Archers and Guard Towers are useful against air units but Mages are much better at taking them out. Mages can just cast Polymorph or Blizzard, which are particularly effective against large groups of airborne units.

NAVY. Build about 3 or 4 Oil Tankers to service one oil field. This keeps a steady supply of oil coming in. A combination of Subs and Battleships makes the best fleet. A great multi-player

strategy is to create a force made up of a few Battleships with 5 or 6 Subs lurking beneath the surface. This gives the impression of a weak force to a navel based enemy, whilst packing a potent surprise for them. A few flying units give your otherwise hidden Subs protection from Dragons and other submersibles.

Juggernauts and Battleships have an advantage over Destroyers in cost versus fire-power, as well as having longer range weapons, but keep in mind that destroyers can shoot down flying units where the big boats can't touch them. A flotilla of mixed ships escorted by a flier can decimate all other vessels, and their extended cannon range allows bombardment of many land targets as well.

A good tactic is to use a Destroyer to come in close to land and draw Catapults/Ballistas closer to shore and use the larger ships with extended fire power to destroy them. Submersibles are useful unless the enemy have a flotilla with fliers who will detect them quite easily. When landing on enemy terrain have at least two Transports escorted with enough warships to cover them. A typical landing party should consist of mainly melee units, supported by a few Ballistas/Catapults for long range backup. Have one worker so that Barracks and other buildings can be established.

BASE DEFENSE. Towers. Build lots of them and build them quick. Building Cannon Towers

with a few Guard Towers around your borders will provide an effective cover for both ground based and airborne attacks. Build a few Guard Towers inside your city (especially near your Peasants!) to ward off flying units.

UNIT DEFENCE. Defence is perhaps the most vital strategy in any war effort. With a good defence, you will have enough time to create a good offence. The most basic defence is a row of 4 or more Knights, then at least 6 Archers right behind them, in a single row. It is always good to have about 2 Ballistas behind the Archers for very effective supporting fire. Ballistas are also ideal for killing Axe throwers and Archers, and sometimes an enemy will retreat once he sees them.

GATHERING RESOURCES. The most important key to gathering resources is to keep a clear path between the hall and the mine. Placing structures too close together will cause the workers to stop, emerge on the wrong side of buildings, choose longer paths and other bothersome inconveniences. Create Barracks or Towers close by, or along the path to mines so that workers will be protected.

When gathering lumber, make sure you are not cutting down a natural blockade around your city, as you cannot be attacked through trees by land forces. Send workers to cut where there is no strategic significance and keep paths open to Town halls or Lumber Mills.

BUILDING CITIES. It's important that your city can protect itself from enemy raids as soon as possible. Inspect surrounding territory and use it to your advantage. Build farms to block passages, or build a defensive line of farms with towers, Archers or Trolls behind them (farms have a higher hit point than towers or walls!).

Establish a strong city and army before devoting attention to specialized units.

LAND ATTACKS. Numerical superiority is the key in any situation. Keep an eye on your units though, they may take off after someone and be separated from the main body and be sitting ducks. When attacking Towers let your long range Ballista (Catapult) attack and keep Knights/Ogres back until it is safe to move in.

WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE
Now that you have a working defense - ie. one that you can leave to self management for a few minutes at a time, it is time to take the struggle to the enemy.

The most important factor in WarCraft 2, is to remember to adapt the strategy to the appropriate location. Thus a well orchestrated offense with land based units may be ineffectual when transposed into navel or airborne units.

By now you will have scouted the enemies base and will know where the critical installations lie. It is most important that you eliminate these installations first and foremost, before attacking

2 THE STRATEGY GUIDE

MODEM OR NETWORK GAMEPLAY.

the other soft targets. When approaching the enemies base, you will likely encounter stiff opposition from the enemy troops. This can be countered by moving your troops closer to the enemy borders in short stages.

A good tactic is to select small 6 man teams with frontline troops to the fore and ranged units following. This greatly increases your overall chances of getting as many troops to the front line as possible. Although it is tempting to select all 9 units in a mass move, if something goes wrong, such as an Dragon Strike, Moving 9 units of knights isn't going to be very helpful when they can't directly fight back.

The best solution is to move a squad of 3 Knights in the fore, 2 Elven Rangers and one Mage. This small force is extremely versatile and can hold its own in a pitched battle until reinforcements arrive. Also, moving in such a small size, increases movement speed - as a smaller squad is less likely to hinder each others movement when passing through difficult terrain.

The base is in sight and most of the enemy troops have been vanquished. But that still leaves the potent force of Guard Towers and cannon Towers for you to surmount. Tactically speaking, you can charge in there with guns blazing - so to speak, but your losses will be horrific. Or you can use those slow cumbersome Ballistas you have been carting around all over the map. Ballistas, although slow and very easy to destroy, have a great

damage attack and more importantly for base attacks, a very long range.

Ballistas have a one square advantage over towers and as such, if positioned carefully, can attack Guard Towers and the like with impunity.

Once you have breached the enemies defences, it is time to take out their unit producing buildings. All Barracks should be targeted first as these can produce relatively cheap units quickly that can hinder your progress severely. Once these have been removed, target the more esoteric of buildings such as the Ogre Mounds, Temples and Dragon Roosts.

When all the peons are killed, take out the Town Hall for the death blow. Unless you have missed a Peon somewhere, they cannot rebuild the Town Hall. Once the Town Hall is destroyed, the death knell has sounded for your opponent.

SPELLS & MAGIC

PALADIN:

Holy Vision: Just like Far-Seeing from Warcraft 1. Useful for scouting areas. Better though to use flying machines for scouting, as they are faster and cover more ground for no mana cost.

Healing: This spell is only truly useful when you have large numbers of Paladins with which to cast it with. Even the most badly savaged of units can be fully restored with this spell.

Exorcism: Only useful against the dead. The more units you target this spell upon, the less damage it does.

THE WARCRAFT 2 UNITS: HUMAN/ORC

GROUND:

Peasant/Peon: Their purpose is to build structures, mine gold, and harvest wood.

Footman/Grunt: Used for early exploration and initial defence.

Elven Archer/Troll Axethrower: Attack with arrows and are good for long range shots and air defence.

Elven Ranger/Troll Bezerker: An upgrade of the Archer/Troll.

Knight/Ogre: Not very strong unless upgraded to Paladins/Ogre-Mage.

NAVAL: Transport: Used to transport troops across bodies of water.



Destroyer: The simplest type of sea attack units, are also capable of attacking aerial units.



Oil Tanker: Can build Oil Platforms and gather oil from them.

Submarine/Turtle: Extremely weak defences, but a couple escorting surface craft can make all the difference.

Battleship/Juggernaut: The most powerful marine units in the game.



Paladin/Ogre-Mage: An improvement of the Knight/Ogre which is capable of using spells.

Mage/Death Knight: The most powerful magician, is capable of using 6 different spells.

Ballista/Catapult: Good for long range shots, can take out a formation of enemies in one shot.



Dwarven Demolition

Squad/Sappers: Powerful units capable of destroying units, buildings, trees, and rocks.



"THE POLYMORPH IS A VERY NASTY SPELL, IF YOU DO IT"

MAGE:

Lightning: The basic attack for Mages. It is fairly powerful, and it doesn't use any magic power to fire. It can attack air units as well as land and sea.

Fireball: Not a very effective spell. It uses too much power, and doesn't do enough damage. It is useful in getting rid of towers if you are patient. A nice feature is that it continues beyond its target, so if the enemy is in a row, use the fireball spell to do a great amount of damage.

Flame Shield: This is a good spell for sending a lone troop into an enemy defensive line, but it can be dangerous if any of your other troops come in contacted with the enchanted one. Try casting a flame shield in the middle of a group of enemies. Useful on Peons.

Slow: You can use this spell on retreating enemies, but I have never been able to find a good use for it. Otherwise, cast it on attacking Ogres or other strong units to slow their attacks.

Invisibility: A bit of a disappointment. You can't cast it on

Dwarven Demolition Squads (it will kill them), and Death Knights can still see your invisible units. Use with caution.

Blizzard: To make an effective attack, make sure the caster has plenty of magic power. Useful against a squadron of Dragons and very effective against towers and bases.

Polymorph: A very nasty spell, as if you do it right, the enemy will not notice his forces turning into critters. Your multi-player opponent will wonder where all his units have gone, thinking you have a squad of invisible Paladins loose in his territory. Paranoia is a wonderful weapon.

OGRE-MAGE:

Eye of Kilrogg: An eye that flies around, used for spying. Using the Zeppelin is far easier.

Bloodlust: Causes a stage of berserk on the unit casted upon, making it more powerful in attack and movement, but doesn't enhance armour.

Runes: Land mines that cause explosions when triggered, great for enemy choke points.

DEATH KNIGHT:

Touch of Darkness: The Death Knight's standard form of attack.

Whirlwind: Creates a huge whirlwind which is good for attacking ships and congested units, also useful when those formations of flying attackers appear.

Haste: Increase the speed of units, making them move faster.

Unholy Armour: Increases the defensive factor for the unit casted upon.

Raise Dead: When casted upon recently killed units it creates skeletons which aren't especially powerful, but at least they're extra units and they come free.

Decay: Creates damage on all living things, it lingers a while and softens enemy defense ready for your attack.

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

LEVEL 10: This one looks very difficult, if not impossible. You will have to marshal your forces and more importantly, your expenditure very carefully. Begin construction of a Shipyard and Foundry whilst you are building your ground forces. Only build Footmen for ground troops. You will probably only need about 8 or 9 at any given time. Once you have your ground forces assembled, build up a fleet of about 5 Battleships and send them over to the west and destroy the Orcs' Shipyard and other navel buildings. Now you don't have to worry about any Orcs attacking your city. Don't worry about destroying the rest of the city.

Send your navy down to the other Orc settlement near the middle of the map and destroy their coastal buildings and units. Now transport your Footmen down to destroy the rest of the city.

By now your gold mine should be out of gold. Transport most of your Peasants via Transport down to the razed Orcish city and build a new Town Hall near the gold mine. Now build about 2 or 3 Ballistas and

destroy the Juggernaut in the water south of your new Town Hall. Build another Shipyard on the southern shore and build 5 more Battleships and 1 Transport. Send the Battleships through the entire canal and destroy all the Towers on the banks. Now go get the prisoners and transport them back to your first city to finish.

LEVEL 12: This one can be difficult if you don't know where to look for oil. The best oil field to start out with, is in the lower right corner just south of an island. Send your entire fleet there and build a platform. Now move your Ballistas next to your Shipyard to guard it from naval attacks. Transport over one peasant and build an oil refinery on the island north of the platform to increase your oil supply. When you get enough Paladins, transport them over and destroy the Orc outpost on the island. Now transport over a Peon and build another Town Hall next to the gold mine. Start training more peasants to work this mine and also to harvest lumber for your fleet. When your first gold mine runs out, transport the rest of your gold mining Peons over to work the other mine. Now build a large fleet of Battleships and Submarines and go and destroy the Orcish fleet and Shipyards.

LEVEL 13: The main problem with this level, is all the Dragons that keep attacking you. To counter this, build a strong base with a lot of Guard Towers surrounding it. Now build plenty of Gryphons and Mages to repel the Dragons until you can build a large enough force to destroy the orange enemy. Keep a few Subs and Battleships all along your shore to keep the main Orcish force from landing any land troops. Build about 6 or 7 Gryphons and send them out to destroy all of the Orange Dragon Roosts. If your Gryphons start to



get really damaged, fly them back to your city and heal them with Paladins. When you finish of your first gold mine transport a Peon to a new island and build a Town Hall and start mining again.

Use Flying machines to scout out new mines and send 2 Gryphons to guard your Town Hall from attacks. Transport about 2 or 3 paladins with them, to heal the gryphons after a fight.

Once you've killed the Orange enemy, concentrate on training Paladins and Mages. Build Transports and send the over in waves with a few Gryphons as air support. The weak link in their defences is at the very top of the map where their Town Hall is. Once you take this out you probably won't have any problems defeating the rest of Orcish Horde.

HUMANS

LEVEL 12: This one can be tough unless you build a navy early in the game. Just build about 5 or 6 Destroyers early on just to keep your navy large enough to hold off attacks. Once your navy gets powerful then the enemy won't attack at all. If the computer doesn't attack your navy then he won't lose any ships. If he doesn't lose any ships then he won't build any more. Once you get to that point the level is really easy.

LEVEL 13: This one is probably the toughest Orc scenario. Navy isn't very important in this one so don't worry about it early in the game. Build a few Guard Towers here and there to keep the Gryphon Riders away. Build mostly Ogres and about 10 Death Knights for your main strike force. Build a few Destroyers, Subs and Juggernauts to take out his navy. You need to keep Destroyers with your navy to protect them against air attacks. Once his navy is out of the way, build about 5 or 6 more Juggernauts and take out all the Towers on

the shore of his island. By now you should have been building up a lot of Dragons. Get 9 Dragons and send them all in at once. Most of his Mages are in the northern portion of the island; go after them.

Take out any Towers, Archers, Knights, etc. with whatever Dragons you have left. The purpose of the Dragons is to weaken their defense for your Ogres to come crashing through! Use your Death Knights to take out any Towers at the entrance to the city. Be sure to keep your Death Knights away from Paladins. They will cast exorcism on your Death Knights every chance they get. Now just bloodlust your Ogres and send in everyone to finish off the city.

LEVEL 14:

This level will probably be done best with Dragons, but first the base you start with is constantly attacked, so a new base on the island to the east should be constructed as close to the gold mine as possible. Four Dragon Roosts will suffice, and once you have eight or nine Dragons, their first targets should be the enemy troops stationed near the centre of the island. It's odd they never organized a land attack but hey! Next attack their navy, which won't stand a chance against the dragons (you will lose some but replenish them quickly).

Remove their Shipyard next. A protective circle of Guard Towers make the centre of the capital an expensive attack but little is left to hinder an amphibious landing. While the Dragons are having fun create a Shipyard with accompanying structures to produce two Transports and equip them with four Catapults, seven Ogres, and a Peon to raise a Barracks. The Dragons then concentrate on mobile units, while the Catapults methodically remove stationary targets. The rest is Global domination.

AIR:
Gryphon Rider/Dragon: These flying attackers can win you the game if you build enough and use them carefully.



Gnomish Flying Machine/Goblin Zeppelin: Good for long distance scouting, cannot attack.



BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES:
Farm: A necessity which enables the production of units. One Farm can feed 5 units.

Town Hall/Great Hall: This is your "base" for your alliance, allowing you to build peasants. Is upgradable, allowing further advancement.

Keep/Stronghold: An upgrade of the Town Hall/Great Hall which allows you to build Stables/Ogre Mound and the Gnomish Inventor/Goblin Alchemist.

Castle/Fortress: An upgrade of the Keep/Stronghold that allows you to build Mage Towers/Temple of the Damned, Churches/Altar of Storms and Gryphon Aviaries/Dragon Roost.

Barracks: Allows you to build attack units such as Footmen/Grunts, Archers/Trolls, Knights/Ogres and Ballistas/Catapults. It also allows you to build the Oil Refinery and Foundry and to upgrade your Town Hall.

Shipyard: Allows the building of naval units.

Lumber Mill: This structures allows you to build Elven Archers and adds a value of 25 in lumber production.

Foundry: Enables you to build Transports and Battleships, also allows the upgrading of ships.

Oil Refinery: Adds a value of 25 to your oil production.

Oil Platform: Allows you to drill.

Blacksmith: Required to upgrade your Castle and Ballistas/Catapult, and allows you to upgrade armour and weapons quality.

Stables/Ogre Mound: Allows you to build Knights and is needed to upgrade your keep to a Castle.

Churches/Altar of Storms:

Allows you to upgrade your Knights/Ogres to Paladins/Ogre-Mages.

Gnomish Inventor/Alchemist: Allows you to build Gnomish Flying Machines/Zeppelin.

Gryphon Aviaries/Dragon Roost: Allows you to build Gryphon Riders/Dragons.

Mage Towers/Temple of the Damned: Allows for the production of Mages/Death Knights and the research of their spells.

Scout Towers: Used for observation and detection of enemy units.

Guard Towers: Has the ability to shoot arrows (quite weak) at aerial and land units.

Cannon Towers: Can detect enemies at long range and attack all but aerial units.



Code

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE.

JASSICA16	Enable Cheats
CTRL-F10	Enable Immortality
F10	Get more weapons, max out energy, and get all items
H	Hacker mover (Hold down shift, then click and drag whatever)

On the command line, run the file with these parameters:

warp x (where x is a #) – Warp to level x
skill x – Change default skill level to x (useful when using – warp)
egg 250 – Weapons room cheat (must be used with – warp)

Quick tip: To get a refill on ammo just drop the weapon your using and pick it up again.

DESCENT II

FREESPACE	Level Warp.
ALIFALAFEL	Accessories.
SPANIARD	Toasts all of the robots, use it twice and it will toast the Guide-Bot.
GOWINGNUT	Guide-Bot attacks the robots.
BITTERSWEET	Psychedelic walls.
PIGFARMER	Use it once and it displays "Hi John!!!" Reduce the size of your screen. Use it twice and it displays "Bye John".
GODZILLA	Makes it easier to destroy robots by running into them.

DUKE NUKEM 3D.

To use these codes you have to pause the game and then type them in.

DNKROZ	God Mode Toggle.
DNCORNHOLIO	God Mode Toggle.
DNSTUFF	All weapons, ammo, and key cards.
DNITEMS	All items and key cards.
DNHYPER	Steroids.
DNSCOTTYel	(Where e is the episode # and l is the level #) Level Warp.
DNMONSTERS	Monsters will disappear as soon as they see Duke. Chase plane view.
DNVIEW	Makes Duke throw money when you press the space bar.
DNCASHMAN	Displays the frame rate.
DNRATE	Displays message: Pirates Suck!.
DNBETA	Displays message: Register Cosmo Today!.
DNCOSMO	Displays message: Buy Major Stryker.
DNALLEN	

TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK.

To use these cheats press 'alt+\' first then enter code.

bandaid	Gives you health.
counters	Current current x,y position.
firepower	Gives you all weapons.
garble	Ungarbles ungarbles the cheat codes.
Hello	Weird message.
icantsee	Infrared vision.
nextmission	Advance to next mission.
superuzi	Gives you the super uzi!!!.
version	Version info.
whoami	Shows your handle.

WARCRAFT II.

To use these codes press Enter, type in the code, and press Enter again.

IT IS A GOOD DAY TO DIE	Invincibility.
GLITTERING PRIZES	10,000 gold, 5000 lumber and 5000 oil.
VALDEZ	5000 oil units.
SPYCOB	5000 oil units.
HATCHET	Get wood in 2 chops.
MAKE IT SO	Speed up production.
TITLE	Increases unit speed
NOGLUES	Disables magical traps.
SHOWPATH	Displays entire map.
ON SCREEN	Displays entire map.
DECK ME OUT	Upgrades all technology.
EVERY LITTLE THING SHE DOES	All spells.
UNITE THE CLANS	Instant victory.
YOU PITIFUL WORM	Instant defeat.
NEVER A WINNER	Remove victory.
THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE	Ending.
TIGERLILY	Enables the ORCx and HUMANx cheat codes.
HUMANx	(Where x is the mission #) Warp to Human mission.
ORCx	(Where x is the mission #) Warp to Orc mission.
FASTDEMO	Demo starts earlier.
UCLA	Shows "Go Bruins!" message.
DAY	Shows "FIEF" message.
NETPROF	Laser display.

EARTHWORM JIM.

ITSAWONDERFUL	Extra life.
POPQUIZHOTSHOT	1000 bullets.
ONANDONANDON	Maximum continues.
SLAUGHTERHOUSE	Access to first 5 levels.
HATMAN	Turns Jim into a stick figure.
IDDQD and IDKFA	Picture of EWJ programmers and beta testers.

FURY 3.

TRYMEON	Invincibility.
GIVITIUP	All weapons.
URDUSTD	Turbo.
JUMPNIT	Skip to the Next Level.
WORMITx	(Where x is a level #) Level warp.
To Increase Ammo enter these codes:	
PACKIN1	Servo Laser.
PACKIN2	Isokenetic Gun.
PACKIN3	Rapid Laser.
PACKIN4	DOM.
PACKIN5	Viper.
PACKIN6	Baryon.
PACKIN7	Superbomb.

HEXEN.

INDIANA	Receive all artifacts.
INIT	Restart level.
LOCKSMITH	Receive all keys.
CASPER	No clipping mode.
NOISE	Toggle sound debug.
DELIVERANCE	"Pig" mode (run bacon run).
MARTEK	Type in 3 times and "DEATH".
CONAN	Lose all weapons.
SATAN	God mode.
TICKER	Frame rate.
NRA	Receive all weapons.
WHERE	Show X, Y, Z position.
BUTCHER	Kills all monsters on level.
SHERLOCK	All puzzle items.
MAPSCO	Map code.
PUKE	Script code.
SHADOWCASTER (0,1or 2)	Change character class.
VISIT (XX)	Warp to different level.

TEKWAR.

During the game press any of these hot keys:	
ALT+SHIFT+G	Invulnerability.
ALT+SHIFT+W	All weapons, lots of ammo, and all keycards.
ALT+SHIFT+J	All matrix symbols that you would normally collect by killing the bosses.

A dictator rules the government.
It's time to fight for your music!

BASED on the #1
decade SMASH

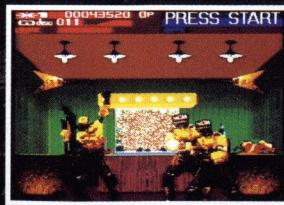


REVOLUTION
MUSIC IS THE WEAPON

MUSIC IS THE WEAPON.



SNES®



Mega Drive™



Playstation™



Saturn™

PC CD-ROM

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WebStalker

The internet is a goldmine for gamers. Every developer has a presence on the web, but it's the little people with a passion that often knock up the best pages. With the number of games related sites growing daily, there's a big chance you'll miss some of the better ones. Not any more! Mat Daniel kicks off the first of our regular monthly looks at the gamers net...

THE INTERLOPER'S GAME CHEATS ARCHIVE.

<http://www.ualberta.ca/~shand/>

What is it: A large collection of hints and cheats compiled by someone/thing called The Interloper.

What's to see: Have you ever wanted to complete that annoying RPG game but didn't know where to put the pink slipper or couldn't find that last piece of the puzzle? If so then this is where you want to be. This site contains loads of hints and tips for nearly every game for the PC. The page is still under construction so there are a few things lacking, such as game walkthroughs, but there are enough patches, bug fixes and other toys to make any gamer want to revive the old collection of 1980's style write-off's.

Good Bits: Everything's there in one place. Search engine to find things quickly.

Bad Bits: Not enough walkthroughs.

Overall: Useful.



since 1995, and as Corporation is their first venture into the lucrative PC Games business, they are hoping for a big one.

The blurb on the page says that the game will be the ultimate multi-user strategy wargame, and taking a look at the grabs they are heading for that goal. Check it out.

Good Bits: It's Aussie, great grabs.

Bad Bits: No Demo in sight.

Overall: Impressive.

DIGICRAFT SOFTWARE'S HOMEPAGE.

<http://audio.apana.org.au/~scameron/digicraft.html>

What is it: Home page to a little known Australian games house, DigiCraft.

What's to see: The page has info about who DigiCraft are and what they have done in the past. There are shareware games that they have written available for download, including Megamaze, an easy 4 player game where you inhabit a maze environment and run around collecting weapons to kill the other players. Just think, if you could give that game a first person perspective, a shotgun and spooky music you'd have a real winner. There is a good collection of links available and a competition to get you excited.

Good Bits: Free stuff.

Bad Bits: Fairly dull page.

Overall: Ordinary.

most compressive game page around. This page links you to a whole range of gaming goodies, from The latest CD games to Thrustmaster pages, from the 3D Gaming Scene to Multi player and on-line games. There are weekly 'Hot Spots' where page writer Gregg Keizer thinks you'll find some pretty cool stuff. This page will not only give you a listing of great pages, but you also get a mini-review on each so that you're not wasting your time with useless Web pages. Some of these mini-reviews even have screen shots. In the great Web tradition this page keeps a great listing of other Game related Web Links pages, so if you can't find it here you'll be sure to be hyperlinked to it sooner or later.

The biggest plus is that this site is written by publishing company Ziff-Davis, so the page is always up to date and the expired links are updated on a regular basis (we all know how annoying it is to find Web pages full of links that go absolutely nowhere). I found this page to be quite speedy, so even 14.4k modem users will be pleased.

Good Bits: Loads of information.

Bad Bits: Not structured well.

Overall: Big.

X-WING PAGE.

http://www.wpi.edu/~ss/XW_index.html

What is it: X-Wing, X-Wing and more X-Wing. One of the largest archives of X-Wing material, George Lucas would be proud.

What's to see: Not an overly exciting page, but where it lacks in innovation and design, it compensates with resources for the X-Wing fanatic. Naturally, with all dedicated pages such as this one there is the inevitable FAQ. This walks you through the entire original game, leaving you with a feeling that completion was not as hard as you thought it was. There are handy tips for the beginner, such as avoiding those

CORPORATION - "OFF WORLD".

<http://www.ocean.com.au/corporation/corp.htm>

What is it: An all new Australian programming house called Australis MicroProgramming have created a page dedicated to their first production, called Corporation.

What's it about: A groovy page to show off their great looking game, which should blow everyone away when it comes out.

Australian MP have been around

On this page you'll find the

deadly missile locks and general info about each enemy fighter you will encounter.

If you watched the Return of the Jedi fight scene above Endor and thought "That's not how I would have done it" or "I could have done it better" well now you have the chance with The Battle of Endor mission file, just one of the 30 or so TOD's (Tour of Duty's or missions) available for download, with descriptions on each. All TOD's are really small files so downloading them is not a drawn out affair but a mere 10 seconds or so. Or alternatively grab one of the MISSION/GFX/TOD/ANYTHING X-Wing Editors and make your own. Turn your X-Wing fighter plane into a flying Big Mac, shooting deadly ion-pickle rays and avoiding a squadron of Apple Pie's.

Good Bits: Very useful for the seasoned X-Wing freak that's done it all and needs a new challenge.

Bad Bits: Boring web page. No colour or Java.

Overall: Intense.

THE GAME FACTORY.

<http://www.gamefactory.com/>
What is it: A US Shareware shack pumping out titles that no one has heard of before. Joy.

What's to see: Not a hell of a lot. The Games Factory have designed 3 titles in their brief history and all are available for download to trial. If you think that these games are hot then there is the obligatory order form to get your very own copy.

Good Bits: Shareware.

Bad Bits: Not enough on the page. Dull.

Overall: At least it's got games.

STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP HQ.

<http://www.ssg.com.au/>
What is it: Home to the makers of the ever popular game Warlords II and other such simulations.

What's to see: War, death, destruction and domination have been the trade mark for SSG software ever since they emerged, and here they are. Find out what new releases are coming out of the hotpot including new mission scenarios for Carriers at War and The Last Blitzkrieg - a WWII sim for the Western Front enthusiast.

Good Bits: Good links to other SSG games.

Bad Bits: Sales orientated.

Overall: Average.

MATT CARLSON'S PC GAMES PAGE.

<http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~mcarlson/Other/pcstuff.html>

What is it: Some guy named Matt has created a page about his favourite games, and at the PowerPlay office we agree totally with what he has to say.

What's to see: Lots of up-to-date info about some of the best games to be released this year, including shareware.

Bad Bits: Not enough on the page. Dull.

Overall: Freakish.

INTERACTIVE MAGIC

<http://www.imagicgames.com>

What is it: Interactive Magic's info & sales pages.

What's to see: Who are Interactive Magic? They are a software house dedicated to the hard core simulation genre, well known for the only real helicopter sim since Gunship, "Apache Longbow". There are sneak previews of new stuff, such as Hind, the sequel to Apache which puts you in charge of a Russian attack chopper. Find out how to link both Apache and Hind together to form an 8 player blast fest.

The page is stylish and informative for all the products available. Technical Support is there at the click of a button, as well as a Message Board thingy for you to throw up any questions you have about fixes, new stuff etc.

Good Bits: Demo's, System Requirements, patches, order forms etc.

Bad Bits: None really.

Overall: Excellent.

Big Sites

ELECTRONIC ARTS ONLINE.

<http://www.ea.com>

Home of the Greek Gods of PC computer publishing and the largest distributors of PC entertainment on the planet, including Origin, Bullfrog, EA Sports, Nova Logic, Road & Track.

VIRGIN INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT.

<http://www.virgin.com>

Try a box of Zesty Bytes at the Virgin Home Page in tasty morsels Papyrus, Looking Glass Technologies, Westwood and other new taste sensations.

3D REALMS WEB BBS.

<http://www.3drealms.com>

Established as the next generation of gaming, 3D Realms have dedicated themselves to publishing Online games to be run over the Internet and other forms of multi-player networking. Big boys games.

SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE/MICROPROSE ENTERTAINMENT.

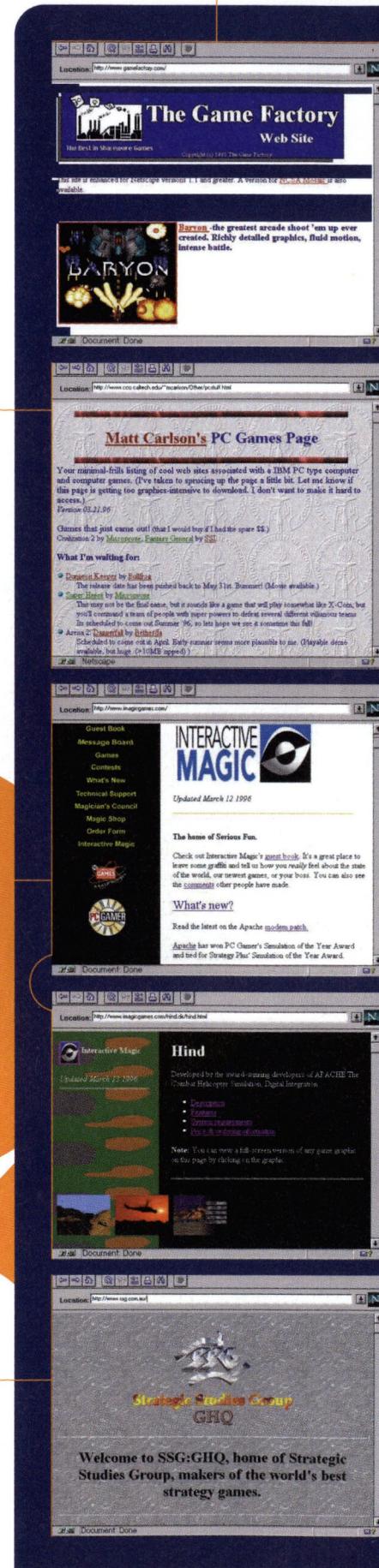
<http://www.microprose.com>

The engine room of the thinking persons game. Makers of the pinnacle of both strategy and flight Simulations. Checkout the latest of the greatest god games ever created, Civilization II.

ACTIVISION ON THE WEB

<http://www.activision.com>

One of the old boys on the block. Activision have been around for a long time and know what a gamer wants. Drop by to play the online game Spycraft or checkout details on the next Mech II add-on, MechNET.



THE NEED FOR

ULTIMATE SPEED

The ante has been upped again, processor performance reaches new highs as Intel release its next generation processor, the Pentium Pro, successor to the Pentium. The Pentium Pro is faster than previous processors, which would ordinarily mean faster games, but the Pro version of the Pentium is quite a different beast to the standard Pentium and unlike previous evolutions of the x86 line, it doesn't necessarily equate to better game speed, but more on that later.

JERKY AND UNPLAYABLE

Most of the processor's function in running games software is used in processing the environment that you play in, and calculating the world that the player sees and interacts with. The processor also has the function of displaying those pretty graphics on screen and pumping stereo music and sound effects to your ears. All of this information has to be continuously updated, screen updates ideally occur at thirty frames per second - if your processor can cope with the load. We've all seen what happens when the processor can't cope, screen updates slow down noticeably, making the game jerky and near unplayable. This is more apparent now with the surge of first person perspective games such as DOOM, Heretic, Descent, Hexen, Mech Warrior II and the like. As always, the need for more and more speed is critical. Keep that frame rate up there in at

least the high twenty's and the game becomes a lot more playable. Thus we have the endless upgrade pursuit that's particular to PC gaming.

However, even before higher performance processors start appearing, game developers have already started to design games that will utilise this extra power. Take Mech Warriors II for example, this game needs quite a lot of grunt to be really playable. Anything under a Pentium 90 won't cut it in the preferred high resolution mode of 640 x 480.

Processor speed is required for creating and updating the three dimensional world that you move around in.

In an ideal world, dedicated graphics chips or processors would take care of burdening tasks such as creating and displaying 'virtual reality' worlds, leaving the processor to do the other tasks which it can cope with more easily.

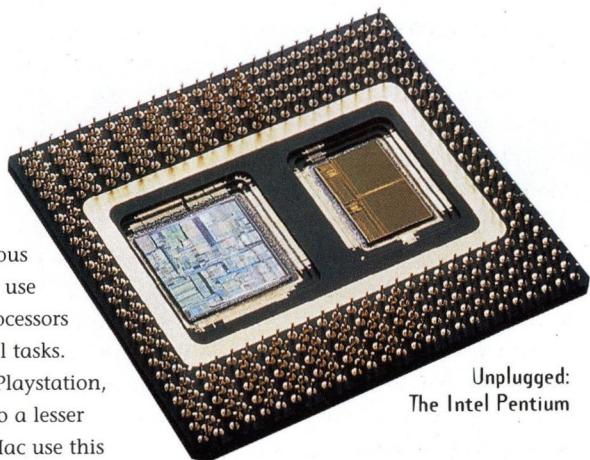
HIGH-SPEED 3D GRAPHICS

It would obviously be more advantageous for the tasks of drawing to be done by a separate processor, a processor that has specifically been designed for high speed graphics output, with 3D polygon calculation and creation built into the chip. This would mean that the main processor doesn't have to waste all of its valuable resources with the drawing of hundreds of 3D objects, which it wasn't primarily designed to do. From the beginning of the PC age, the single

CPU has had to do it all. The obvious solution is to use dedicated processors for individual tasks. The Amiga, Playstation, Saturn and to a lesser extent, the Mac use this approach. They accomplish similar results to that which a high-end Pentium can achieve by combining the power of many slower and less sophisticated chips dedicated to just one task.

The current graphics accelerators on the market do help to a certain extent by taking over the task of moving around huge chunks of graphical data. Some of the newer accelerators even have limited polygon creation algorithms.

However, a new breed of multimedia graphic accelerators are about to be unleashed into the market. These cards contain very fast 3D polygon creation and related routines especially useful for 3D games. The new Diamond Edge card and the 3D Blaster cards already offer these features, and you can expect a lot more cards based on the new multimedia graphic accelerators to start appearing very soon. If you have seen Daytona in the arcades, these new multimedia graphic accelerator cards offer equal or better quality graphics even running on a low end Pentium. Most of these new accelerators will also offer special instructions for fast graphics compression and decompression for full screen



Unplugged:
The Intel Pentium

display (Super VGA resolution - 640 x 480), full motion video (30 - 60 frames per second) and true colour (16.7 million colours). This means games will simply have better graphics - gameplay, intro and cut-scenes, while you will be able to view video-CD format CD-ROMs.

THE INTEL TRAIL

Until these new multimedia accelerators become a standard item in most household machines, the Pentium Pro will still be the fastest way available to play those latest games. Here's a little history on Intel's processors to give you an idea of the performance Intel has accomplished with their latest offering:

- November 15, 1971. Intel releases its first processor, the 4004. Its speed was rated at around 0.06 MIPS (Million Instructions Per Second) and this processor ran at an incredible 108KHz (very slow!). The 4004 contained just 2,300 transistors.
- June 8, 1978 saw the release of the chip that started it all, the 8086. Speed-wise the 8086 rated at around 0.33 - 0.75 MIPS and containing 29,000 transistors. Four years later, the 8-bit 8086 was superseded by the 16-bit

80286. It performed at around 0.9 to 2.66 MIPS, and contained 134,000 transistors.

● Another three years passed before the arrival of the 80386DX (Intel's first commercially available 32-bit processor). The '386 contains 275,000 transistors and performs at around 5 - 6 MIPS. 1989 saw the release of the 80486DX, and was soon followed by the DX2 and the DX4 models. The 80486's speed is rated at around 20 to 70.7 MIPS and the chip consists of up to 1.6 million transistors in the DX4 version.

● The next processor was released in 1993, the current processor of choice, the Pentium. Speed wise, it rates at 100 to 200+ MIPS and contains a massive 3.2 million transistors. As you can see from these figures Intel's processors have increased in speed at an astronomical rate.

● On November 1, 1995 Intel released its sixth generation x86 microprocessor, the 150MHz Pentium Pro. It is rated at over 300MIPS (300,000,000 instructions per second), and there is still a 200MHz model to come. The Pentium Pro processor offers state of the art technology with advanced features, the chip contains a ludicrous 21 million transistors, 15.5 million of these are used in the integrated level 2 cache which is no longer on the motherboard. The other 5.5 million transistor make up the processor core.

When the Pentium Pro was designed, Intel specifically optimised performance for dealing with 32-bit software code and not 16-bit code. In the early days of Intel processors the internal registers (used for storing values and addresses inside the processor) were 16 bits wide. When the chips went to their current 32-bit incarnation these registers were extended. Programs written specifically for 32-bit and above Intel processors (80386, 80486, Pentium, Pentium Pro) cannot

run on a 16 bit Intel chip (8086, 80286), but the 32-bit processors would run existing programs in their 16-bit form. Most people (there are still a few 8086 and 80286 machines floating around) are no longer using a 16-bit processor in their systems. But to allow for backwards compatibility with this extreme minority of users, most software - including the Windows operating system and most games - are programmed in 16-bit code. Even Windows 95 still has some lingering 16-bit code.

What this all means is that when a Pentium Pro is running 16-bit code it will usually perform at a level near that of the original Pentium, or even slower in some cases, which is why Pro's started at a higher Mhz. Code that is written in 16-bits will run slower when compared with a similar program written in 32-bit code. At the moment, most software we use is still mostly 16-bit code, especially Windows based programs. Windows 95 has changed that to some extent, with all that is certified Windows 95 compatible being written in full 32-bit code. There is a point to all this, we all know 32-bits are better than 16, Intel believe that 32-bit programs will become the standard for all x86 software and it certainly is starting to look that way, with Microsoft's two major operating systems, Windows 95 and Windows NT both being essentially 32-bit operating systems. Windows 95 is mostly a 32-bit operating system, but has 16-bit code there to allow old Windows 3.x software to function. Windows NT is a full fledged 32-bit operating system.

Intel's prediction is not a bad one, and as the latest games are becoming more and more dependent on at least a 486 processor. The Pentium Pro will be able to run these games significantly faster than a 486 or Pentium machine could.

FINAL VERDICT

The Pentium Pro is a lot more expensive than a 486 or Pentium, as are all Intel processors when they are first released. In around a year or so, Pentium Pro powered PC's will probably sell for equal or less than current Pentium systems. Games players who want seriously fast 3D games can either save their pennies for the mighty Pentium Pro (currently AUS\$6000 and up) or can wait for the next generation of multimedia graphics accelerator cards to power the systems they have now.

Intel may soon release their P55C Pentium chip which will contain built in Multimedia instructions for 3D acceleration and video decoding, later followed by Pentium Pro processors equipped with this amazing feature. The Pentium Pro is a very sophisticated processor that has incredible speed, but at the moment I would recommend waiting. People wanting amazingly fast games won't have to wait very long until the new multimedia accelerators arrive, costing far less than buying a Pentium Pro-based system.

These graphics processors will probably do more for your games than a 150MHz Pentium Pro alone would, although the idea of a 3D card in a Pentium Pro equipped machine is an exciting one, possibly meaning less frequent upgrades. While a wonderful processor, for the moment the Pro should be left for use in high end desktop systems and file servers - for which markets it is positioned by Intel at the moment. By next year this will have changed, software developers will have the big shift to pure 32-bit code well underway and the cost of the Pentium Pro will have fallen dramatically. Until then, games players should wait at least until we see what these new multimedia accelerators are capable of.

G.W.

Hot Chips

4004
1971, 108kHz, 2,300 transistors.

8008
1972, 200kHz, 3,500 transistors.

8080
1974, 2 MHz, 6,000 transistors.

8085
1976, 5 MHz, 6,500 transistors.

8086
1978, 5-10 MHz, 29,000 transistors.

8088
1979, 5-8 MHz, 29,000 transistors.

80286
1982, 6-12 MHz, 134,000 transistors.

Intel386DX
1985, 16-33 MHz, 275,000 transistors.

Intel386SX
1988, 16-33 MHz, 275,000 transistors.

Intel486DX
1989, 25-50 MHz, 1,200,000 transistors.

Intel386SL
1990, 20-25MHz, 855,000 transistors.

Intel486SX
1991, 16-33 MHz, 1,185,000 transistors.

IntelDX2
1992, 50-66 MHz, 1,200,000 transistors.

IntelDX4
1994, 75-100 MHz, 1,600,000 transistors.

Intel486SL
1992, 20-33 MHz, 1,400,000 transistors.

Pentium
1993, 60-166 MHz, 3,200,000 transistors.

Pentium Pro
1995, 150-200 MHz, 5,500,000 transistors.

SetUp

WINDOWS 95 IS YOUR FRIEND - REALLY IT IS.

Windows 95 really is the way of the future - at least in terms of sheer convenience, or at least that's how it's supposed to be. Too often though, using it can be a nightmare of hidden features and not especially sensible ways of dealing with things. Luckily help is at hand, here Garry Wallis shows off a few neat tricks that'll get things working the way they should. Next month he'll be busy writing answers for the many technical questions you no doubt have, they'll appear on this page, so if you're needing technical stuff explained about anything games related, write to SETUP at the address in the front.

DOUBLE CLICK EXPLORER.

When clicking on a drive or folder icon, hold the **<SHIFT>** key down while double clicking, and instead of opening as a standard single-pane window, it will open up an explorer window.

ALWAYS EXPLORER. If you prefer the Explorer window instead of the standard folder window, you can set Windows 95 to open an Explorer window as default. To accomplish this you need to select the view menu from any active folder, then go down to options. Click on the "file types" tab and you will see a list of registered file types. Scroll down the list until you see "folder", then click on edit, this will bring up another window. Click on set default until the words explore become bold in the action's list, then click OK until the dialogue boxes are all closed. From now on, when a folder or drive is opened an Explorer window will appear as default.

DOTTY CD. In older DOS versions, typing "CD .." would go back to the parent directory. In Windows 95 you can also type "CD..." to

go back two directories, "CD...." to go back three directories. You get the picture.

DON'T LOAD THAT APP. Do you have documents that have a specific application associated with them, and want to load the document into a different applications? Hold down **<SHIFT>** while right clicking the document and a new option in the menu will appear, "Open With". Click this option and a list of installed applications will appear. Choose the application to use with the document you have selected. To make the desired application always load when a specified document is opened, be sure the "Always use this program to open this type of file" option is ticked.

QUICK VIEWING. So many file formats can get quite tiresome. Every time you want to view a file, the associated application also needs to be started. There has to be a quicker way to browse your files and there is. Windows 95 has a multi file-viewing utility called Quick view which doesn't get installed by default on most systems. To install this nifty utility go into the control panel and double click the Add/Remove Programs icon. Click on the Windows setup tab, select accessories and click on details. Move down the list until you see the Quick View option, make sure the option is ticked, then click OK. You will then have to insert the appropriate windows disk when prompted. When Quick View is installed to view a file right click it and a Quick View option will appear in the menu. Quick view can view quite a few different types of file format. But there are some files that it can't show. In which case the Quick view option won't appear in the right-button menu.

TRASH IT. In windows when a file is deleted it actually goes to the recycle bin. To skip the recycle bin and really delete the file, hold down the **<SHIFT>** key when pressing delete or dragging the file to the recycle bin.

HELP BOOT ME. When windows is just about to start and the "Starting Windows 95" text comes up, press the **F8** key and a menu will appear. This allows you to boot your system in safe mode, or to boot to a DOS prompt. This menu is very helpful if Windows 95 starts playing up on you, as safe mode will run Windows 95 with drivers it knows are working. It is also possible to select these options at boot up without having to go through the menu. Pressing **F4** will boot an older version of DOS if there is still one installed on your hard disk. Pressing **F5** will boot your system in safe mode without loading network drivers. Pressing **F6** will boot your system in safe mode again but will load the network drivers.

CUSTOM LOADING SCREEN. The Windows 95 standard loading screen can be changed for one of your own designs. Any 640 x 480, 256 colour BMP file can be used. For some reason the picture file has to be a 320 x 400 sized image which then gets stretched by Windows 95 to 640 x 480. If you have any commercial image manipulation programs (ie. Photoshop, Photopaint, Paint Shop Pro) then this task is simple. Just reduce your 640 x 480 images size 50% horizontally and 83.33% vertically. If you are not so fortunate as to have one of these wonderful programs then the task is a little harder, but not impossible. Use MS Paint to stretch/Skew the image 50% horizontally, click OK. Here's the hard

bit, Stretch/Skew the image, this time vertically by 104%, then click OK. Then go to Stretch/Skew again and Stretch Vertically by 80%. Check in the attributes option in the image menu. The image size should now be right. Save the file. To get Windows to display your picture rename the file to LOGO.SYS and place the file in the root directory of your boot partition. Re-boot your system to see the results.

CUSTOM EXIT SCREENS. To change the two end screens when you shut down your system, follow the steps involved in creating a custom startup screen. By following the same steps in reducing your images size. In the Windows directory you will see two files called LOGOW.SYS and LOGOS.SYS. LOGOW.SYS is the "Please wait while windows..." screen and the other is the "It is now safe to switch off your computer" screen. Make backup copies of these files, you can never be too careful. Delete these old files and rename your files LOGOW.SYS and LOGOS.SYS accordingly. Windows will now display your pictures when your system is shut down.

DRIVE ICONS ON THE DESKTOP. Instead of having to go into My Computer to access your floppy or hard drives, just drag the drive icons from "My Computer" to the desktop. This will create shortcuts to your drives, any drive icon can be used. Files can now be dragged into or copied from these icons just like the icons in My Computer. You can also rename these shortcut icons to whatever you like. Now every time you need to access a drive you no longer have to waste time opening My Computer first, to get to the desired drive you want to access and use.



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FlashBack

THE ANCIENT ART OF WAR

IT WASN'T ALWAYS SVGA AND CD ROM'S AND NEW GAMES AREN'T NECESSARILY "BETTER THAN EVER"...



Before Warcraft 2, definitely. Before Command & Conquer, of course. Before the original Warcraft. Before even Cannon Fodder. And, amazingly, before Dune 2. Before, in fact, the entire genre they're all calling the "you know, the one where you have little blokes running around, shooting and fighting each other" genre. Before it all there was *The Ancient Art of War*. Released by Broderbund in 1984, it took the whole PC games scene, if not quite by storm, then certainly a heavy drizzle.

War, as it was affectionately known by all who played it, was a superb game. This was mainly due to the unique way it balanced the tactical aspect of a great strategy game with a sense of humour and fun. An accessible wargame before, as we have already ascertained, there were such things. The aim was to capture all your opponent's flags, which were located in villages, forts, or just in the middle of nowhere. Villages and forts also provided all your resources - food and extra troop units - making the capturing of them vital to success.

The centre-piece of War was its ingeniously simple combat design. Zoom in on the action and you see the two warring parties facing off - knights, barbarians and archers standing in the formation you have arranged yourself. In real time you then selected who should charge into the fray or flee to

the hills. It worked perfectly. Well, until you discovered that a team consisting entirely of archers was virtually invincible, that is.

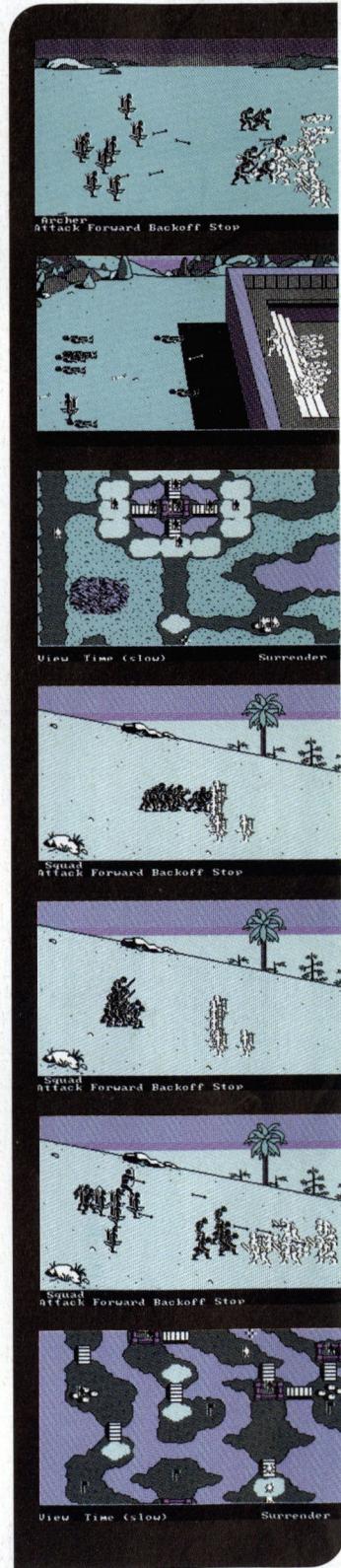
Granted, it looks terribly primitive now (the pink and cyan CGA colour scheme is hardly inspiring), but at the time you couldn't have wished for better or more realistic graphics. The battlefield backdrops, with their variety and sense of depth, seemed stunning ("Wow, the trees are so tiny they look miles away!"). As did neat touches like the sagging shoulders and wobbly knees of your tired troops.

Sadly, despite the gameplay still holding up after all these years, War is unplayable on anything faster than a crippled 386. Turbo button switched off. Running under Windows. With Slowdown installed. And set to "comatose".

Still, War spawned two sequels - War at Sea (which was okay) and War in the Skies (which was far better). In the extraordinarily unlikely event of you be able to get hold of either of these fantastic games, you may even find them in something resembling a playable condition. But probably not.

And now the magazine is drawing to a close, so let us all gather around, hold hands in a firm-yet-comforting manner, bow heads respectfully and shed a fond tear, as we take a minute's silence to remember the glory and greatness that was *The Ancient Art of War*... D.W.

"A STRATEGY GAME WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR"





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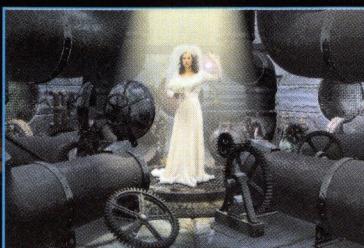
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bad mojo

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